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TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ

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TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ

A MANUAL OF METHOD FOR ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

BY

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PREFACE

This manual of methods of teaching reading in elementary and junior high schools is no formal revision of an older text that enjoys wide use throughout the country. It is, rather, a thoroughly reorganized text that is more advanced and that applies to classroom practice the lessons gleaned from the new psychology of reading. The distinguishing characteristics that commended the earlier book to teachers and supervisors are retained, but significant changes are made in the interests of ampler content that seeks to meet more adequately the needs of teachers of reading through the ninth year.

In the development of this new text the author was guided by the following fundamental aims:

First, the theory underlying classroom practice is fully presented. Mere teaching procedure followed without an understanding of underlying principles is blind routine that enslaves the teacher. Psychological principles that are not appied to actual classroom practices do not free teaching methods from the tyranny of procedure that has only tradition to justify itself. The lessons of the physiology of reading as here presented lead to conclusions governing the mechanical make-up of readers and methods of teaching reading. The chapter on "The Psychology of Reading" is rich in suggestions for teaching methods. Chapter XI, "Developing Power in Silent Reading," is replete with illustrations of classroom practice that applies earlier theory. Throughout the book this intimate relationship between theory and practice is consistently maintained.

Second, the content is developed with reference to the actual needs of teachers of reading. Every suggested proce-

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dure has stood the test of classroom use. The aim throughout is to achieve a manual that presents definite lines of procedure to teachers whose experience has not brought them practical methods of solving reading problems. It is suggested that teachers and supervisors refer to the treatment of phonetics in Chapter IX, to the type of reading difficulties and remedial measures set forth in Chapter XII, to the procedure in silent reading lessons given on pages 202-205 and to the plan of conducting oral reading lessons as presented on pages 162-185. These illustrations are typical of the character of the presentation throughout the book.

Third, all forms of silent reading are adequately stressed. In Chapter III, "The Psychology of Reading," the psychological basis of silent reading is set forth, and general applications are indicated. In a later chapter, "Developing Power in Silent Reading," the pedagogical applications to every grade through the ninth are clearly made. Here *acquisitive silent reading,* the reading for mere information or story, is distinguished from *interpretational reading,* the reading that is critical and assimilative and which is undertaken to meet a specific situation. The dangers of speed reading, "skimming," are presented. This is followed by twenty-four graded and illustrated devices for developing power to acquire thought from the printed page. The concluding topics of the chapter are "How to Develop Power of Assimilative Reading," that is, the reading that is so vital in all study, "How to Conduct Silent Reading Lessons," and "Errors in Silent Reading, Their Causes and Remedial Measures." Teachers of all classes in the nine-year course will find that this chapter concerns itself with their specific silent-reading problems, and that these are treated constructively and sympathetically.

Fourth, the text seeks to help teachers to help themselves. At every appropriate place, the author has made an earnest attempt to find the causes of pupils' difficulties and to evolve

sample remedial programs that teachers can develop further because of their deeper insight into the conditions that produce these teaching problems. Let the reader examine the treatment of "Unsatisfactory Rate in Reading," page 211; "Difficulties of Comprehension in Silent Reading," page 212; "An Analysis of Reading Errors," pages 213-216; "Improving Expression in Oral Reading," pages 175-178; "Causes of Faulty Articulation and Remedial Measures," pages 153-157; "Elimination of Habitual Mispronunciation," pages 148-154. A mere thumbing of these pages will reveal the causal relationship which is made basic in the discussion of remedial devices. The aim is not to give all possible remedial measures, but rather to indicate a helpful line of thinking for a teacher who is eager to evolve her own corrective drills.

Fifth, an analysis of the most commonly used reading systems is included. Those readers that offer not only a series of basal books but also a definite mode of pedagogic procedure are analyzed briefly, merely to indicate to those charged with the selection of a reading system the type of study necessary before the final choice is made. No reading system is recommended for that is not the function of the analyses of reading methods offered in Chapters V, VI, VII.

Sixth, standardized reading tests are analyzed, their values discussed, and the modes of administering them and interpreting the results are set forth. Chapter XIV, devoted exclusively to the study of reading scales, gives samples of the most helpful scales thus far evolved and attempts a general evaluation of them. Here again, the aim is not to indicate which scale to use, but rather to help teachers and supervisors to find a scale that will aid them in the solution of their specific problems. Although the pedagogic and supervising values of reading scales are given, the text does not fail to discuss their limitations so that a teacher may make her own conclusions concerning their worth.

Seventh, the text attempts to help teachers make their own

diagnoses of the reading difficulties of pupils. Reading scales are introduced mainly to serve this end. The discussion of the following topics is illustrative of this fundamental character of this manual: "Lip Reading," page 18; "Faulty Articulation," pages 154-158; "Lack of Expression in Oral Reading," pages 175-178; "Reading Errors Due to Apperception," page 184; "Analysis of Unsatisfactory Rate in Reading," page 211; "Inadequate Comprehension in Reading," page 212; "Causes of Reading Errors," pages 213-216; "Diagnosis of Types of Reading," pages 220-223.

Eighth, the method of adequately motivated teaching is emphasized. The author has consistently stressed those methods of teaching which present to children a rationalized motive for meeting the successive reading problems that confront them. In presenting specialized drills to help special cases, in making tests to discover individual needs and specific weakness, provision is made to enlist the pupils' active cooperation. The varieties of drills in the chapters dealing with phonetics, oral reading, silent reading, grouping according to weakness, are all presented as motivated tasks in which pupils are led to see the ultimate end of the effort that is asked of them. At every appropriate turn, teaching by *problem* and *project* is described. Each learning situation thus arises in a circumstance that challenges thought or invites pupils to attack a situation taken from life, that is, a unit of purposeful experience. Motivated reading, reading that springs from a desire to convey or acquire thought; this is the keynote in the chapters dealing with the pedagogical aspects of the teaching of reading.

Ninth, drill, adequate in amount and variety, is supplied the teacher. Drills that differ in form, in sense appeal, or in content are suggested in abundance. Nor are games overlooked as drill media. For illustrations of this aim of the text, the reader is urged to note the various means of introducing new sight words, or insuring mastery of sight words,

of habituating phonograms, of developing power to extract thought from the printed page, of developing correctly phrased reading or of learning to organize data obtained in selective reading. The offerings under each of these habit-forming processes in reading reveal clearly the earnest effort of the author to supply adequate drill material which seeks to make knowledge function as habit.

Tenth, the needs of supervisors as well as teachers are kept in view. Modes of administering tests, diagnoses of types of unsatisfactory oral and silent reading, remedial programs and methods of "follow-up" serve to help supervisors of reading.

These, then, are the aims that have given shape and spirit to this new form of *Teaching Children to Read.* How effectively the author has done his work he must leave to the judgment of teachers and supervisors who dedicate their efforts to developing in children effective reading habits, the skills that become the potent instruments for self-education.

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TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ

TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ

CHAPTER I

THE MEANING AND NATURE OF READING

Reading Essentially a Problem of Thought Acquisition

The word *reading* is traced to the Anglo-Saxon *raedon,* which means "to advise." *Raedon* referred to the process of searching in books (or bark) for counsel. The Latin *lego* means "to gather"; hence the derived meaning "to gather ideas from written sources." These etymological definitions, crude and far from the vital problems that must be solved in teaching children to read, nevertheless reflect the essence of the function of reading, namely, "to impart ideas, thoughts, inspirations."

To the ancients reading was a *mysterie,* a magic art, understood by the shamans and the medicine men. Although learning to read is practically compulsory today, we must remember that it is none the less a *mysterie,* for it is just as complex a psycho-physiological process. How can a collection of symbols, themselves static and formal, arouse dynamic thought and living inspiration in the mind of the child?

The Elements of Reading

1. *To Extract Thought.*—As far as the classroom is concerned, reading must discharge certain definite func-

tions. We must consider these before we discuss methodology in reading, for they indicate the goal of all method. Classroom reading must seek to develop in each child, first, the ability to extract thought from the printed page. Since this is essentially the object of reading in later life, it must become the governing aim of the teacher's endeavors. All other aims, such as pronunciation, expression, language, diction, must be subordinated to reading for thought.

2. *Proper Vocalization.*—The second function of classroom reading is to develop the ability properly to vocalize, in the words of the author, the thought that was gained; in other words, the ability to read with accurate enunciation, clear articulation, and convincing expression. Here is posited a secondary aim of reading, which, however necessary in the classroom, forms no part of the reading of after-school life. The teacher finds this added function of reading exceedingly vital. Unless the pupils vocalize properly, how can she test their ability to recognize symbols, to speak articulately, to utter thought expressively? Through the oral rendition the teacher even learns whether the child has the author's thought and responds to the emotional appeal. But, in everyday life, the sole function of reading is the acquisition of thought, whereas proper oral reading is regarded as a delightful accomplishment. In the final analysis, reading is a means of gaining thought, whereas oral reading is a means of expressing thought.

3. *Literary Appreciation.*—But a course of study in reading, the aims of which do not transcend thought acquisition and thought expression, fails in its most vital function. It must strive to develop, in addition, an ap-

preciation of the best in literature. Reading that does not accomplish this end is sterile in those endeavors in which it ought to be most productive. We have left behind the formal conception of education which holds that the school must give only the symbols of knowledge. With such an aim in elementary education, reading is complete that teaches how to gain thought and vocalize it correctly. But the scope of education, even of elementary grade, must be more liberal. It must be cultural and inspirational. No school subject is so well adapted to develop this spirit as reading. It introduces the child to the best thoughts and ideals in the life of the race. Its subject matter, literature, stimulates the finer emotions, quickens the imagination, and develops a keener æsthetic sense. A school course in reading that discharges these functions has fulfilled its *raison d'être,* for it has given the child the most effective instrument for self-culture and character development.

This literary ideal should determine the choice of subject matter from the very first grade. The school primer, whose inspirational appeal is summed up in "See the black cat!" "What ails the lock?", must rapidly become a relic of past pedagogical practice. From the very beginning the school course must dedicate itself to the task of developing a finer language sense and a greater capacity for literary appreciation. "That schooling," says Charles W. Eliot, "which results in this taste for good reading, however unsystematic and eccentric it may have been, has achieved a main end of elementary education; and that schooling which has not succeeded in implanting this permanent taste has failed. Guided and animated by this impulse to acquire knowledge and exercise his imagination

through reading, the individual will continue to exercise himself all through life."

Reading Ability is Not General

Experience shows that we are not equally proficient in the reading of all types of material. Thus, a person who reads his newspaper effectively may not read a good novel as well. The intelligent reader of fiction may find that in reading the expository prose of Ruskin his reading rate is retarded and greater difficulty is experienced in securing the author's thought. It is not uncommon for a scientifically trained person to find no little difficulty in reading simple lyrical poetry or literary fiction. It is because of the frequency of such instances, that we regard *reading* as *a composite of specific reading abilities.*

There are many reasons to explain the specific rather than the general nature of reading ability. First, reading is a form of complex thinking involving recollection, analysis, selection, and synthesis. As the process of thinking changes with the nature of each new experience, so the mental processes and skills of reading change with each new type of reading material. Secondly, each experience is thought of in terms of its own appropriate vocabulary. The mind that has gained facility with one specialized vocabulary is not as ready to react to a new set of language forms. And finally, comprehension is determined by the degree of attention. The mind is set for situations with which we are familiar. Hence reading is more intelligent if its content is in harmony with the interests of the reader.

The conclusion that reading ability is specific, not general, is not without its lessons for the classroom. It teaches

clearly that *the reading matter of the school must be of great variety,* including poetry and prose; informational as well as literary prose; historic, geographic, and scientific as well as narrative text. Teach children how to read arithmetic, and at once you improve ability in this subject. Do not consider it amiss to introduce into the reading lessons text selected from reference books of all kinds; from government reports on subjects intimately related to school work or to the life of the pupil; from advertisements of schools and camps; from publicity material issued by social and philanthropic institutions; in brief, from the endless reading matter that constantly clamors for attention.

A second classroom application of the conclusion that reading is specific in nature teaches that *each reading lesson must begin with clear perception of purpose.* Unless pupils know why a given text is to be read, they cannot read it intelligently. The clearer the purpose is perceived, the more effective is the reading of the text and the surer are the pupils to grasp the author's message.

The Problems in Teaching Children to Read

With this view of the function and the nature of reading, what are the problems that confront us in teaching this art of thought acquisition? To begin with, we must look upon reading as a *physiological process,* for we must know how these symbols give rise to images on the retina, how the eye moves over this series of symbols, the strain that is experienced, the causes of fatigue and the conditions governing accurate and rapid visual grasp. Reading must be regarded, secondly, as a *psychological process,* for the vital questions here are: How are these visual

symbols interpreted into thought? How can speed and accuracy of this interpretation be promoted? And, finally, we must study reading from its *pedagogical aspect,* for the teaching problems are many. Reading is an artificial process with artificial symbols. How shall it be made natural to the child? What means of motivation shall we use? Of the imposing array of methods in reading, which shall we select, and what shall be the principle of choice? Should 95 per cent of classroom reading be oral, if 95 per cent of the reading of later life is silent? Will this training in oral reading make us proficient in silent reading? Should we train pupils to read slowly and orally in the classroom, in spite of the fact that the reading of mature life is visual and rapid? Does the slow oral reading of the classroom prepare for the rapid visual reading of later days? Is that recitation in reading efficient which requires that all children rivet their eyes on a single paragraph as some unfortunate victim labors through it? Each error makes the pupil more self-conscious and less able to perform the task. What do the other children learn? How much reading does a child learn by listening to others read, even though they be good readers? These are a few of a host of problems that arise in the teaching of the subject. Their answers are vital and make up the pedagogy of reading. The reader's attention is therefore invited to three successive phases of the subject, which are treated in the chapters entitled, "The Physiology and Hygiene of Reading," "The Psychology of Reading," and "The Pedagogy of Reading."

Suggested Reading [1]

Arnold, Sarah L., *Learning to Read* (Silver, Burdett & Co.).

Colby, J. R., *Literature and Life in the School* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Goldwasser, I. Edwin, *Method and Methods in the Teaching of English* (D. C. Heath & Co.), Ch. i.

Huey, Edmund B., *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* (Macmillan Co.), Ch. i.

Laing, Mary E., *Reading; A Manual for Teachers* (D. C. Heath & Co.), Ch. xxi.

McClintock, P. L., *Literature in the Elementary School* (University of Chicago Press).

Wheat, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Ch. i.

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[1] The bibliographies at the end of each chapter are not exhaustive. The aim is, rather, to suggest such reading as will amplify and elaborate the various phases of the subject treated in each chapter. Where the publisher is not mentioned, the reader will find the book or the reference listed at the end of a previous chapter.

CHAPTER II

PHYSIOLOGY AND HYGIENE OF READING

Processes in Oral Reading

An analysis of the processes in oral reading will readily show the teacher that they can be summed up under four heads. It is obvious that the first must be *visual images* of the words in the text. Just as soon as these are formed they call up automatically the second, *auditory images* of these same words. The mind hears the sounds of the words. These auditory images, in their turn, prompt the third, *vocal motor images.* The organs used in sound production seem to be set in motion by an imperative command and the sounds are produced. But words have meaning, hence we find, in the fourth place, *ideas and imagery* arising in various degrees of vividness. In the discussion of the physiology of reading we must begin with the first of these problems, viz., the formation of visual images. The others will be treated in the following chapter.

Eye Movement in Reading

It is a common belief that in reading the eye moves across the whole of each line, from left to right, at a uniform rate and then moves back again, from right to left to begin the next line. Careful observation shows rather that the eye moves across each line in a series of approximately rhythmic sweeps and pauses, as is shown in

Figures 1 and 2. It is also important to note that *reading takes place during the pauses,* not during the sweeps. To

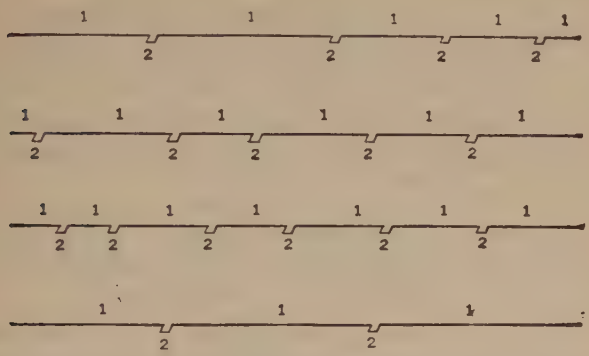

FIG. 1.—DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF EYE-SWEEPS (1) AND PAUSES (2) OF FOUR PEOPLE READING A LINE OF ABOUT THREE INCHES.

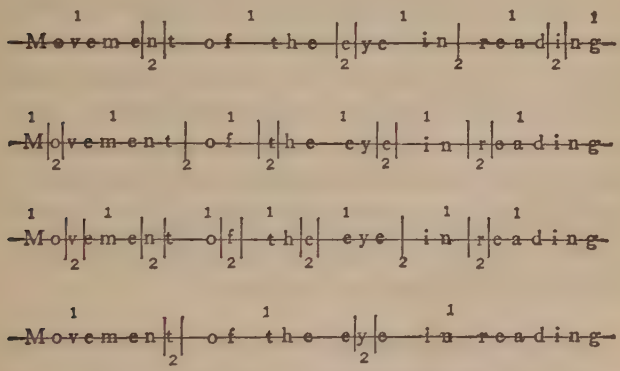

FIG. 2.—ACTUAL EYE-SWEEPS (1) AND PAUSES (2) OF SAME FOUR PEOPLE READING SAME LINE.

begin the next line, the eye moves across the line, from right to left, in one continuous sweep.

Further Analysis of Eye Movement

Experimental study of eye movement reveals the following set of facts:

1. For any one person, the fixation points, that is, the pauses, are fairly regular as he reads line after line.

2. The first pause or fixation point usually occurs not as expected, at the first letter but a little to the right of it, at, say, the second or third letter or at the end of the first word.

3. In oral reading almost twice as many pauses are made, by the same reader, as in silent reading. Almost invariably the pauses are of longer duration.

4. As pupils advance through the grades, the number of pauses per line decreases. Children in the introductory grade show as many as four pauses in five words.

5. Poor readers differ from good readers in at least two important respects. First, they make considerably more fixation points. Second, their movements are often *regressive,* that is, the eye reverses the direction and goes back to a point to the left of the last fixation point in order to "re-see." Regressive movements almost invariably give evidence of confusion. If the reader will trace the succession of fixation points, by the aid of the numbers, in the following line, he will readily perceive the character of regressive movements.

John now found himself alone in the great wide world.
2 1 3 5 4 6 8 7 9 10 11

The reader, an eighth-grade pupil, who was backward in silent reading, made the space between *John* and *now* his first fixation point; he then went back to *h* in *John.* Similarly 5 and 8 show regressive movements.

It may interest teachers to analyze the character of the eye movements set forth in the following lines. Which are regressive movements? What differences may be noted between the first and the third record?

Poor reader, 4th grade, silent reading:

He now found himself alone in the great wide world
2 4 3 5 1 6 8 7 11 10 9 12 13 14 16 17 18 15

Good reader, silent reading, 8th grade:

He now found himself alone in the great wide world
1 2 3 4 5

Good reader, oral reading, 8th grade:

He now found himself alone in the great wide world
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Pedagogic Significance of Eye Movement

The character of eye movement in reading gives added weight to the conviction that we do not read by joining letters in phonic succession, but rather by recognizing units as large, at least, as whole words. The more mature we are, naturally, the larger is the unit of visual perception. In the earliest exercises children must be taught to read words and short phrases as wholes. Our knowledge of eye movement has helped to lay the axe to the old synthetic reading methods.

Hygienic Importance of Eye Movement in Reading

This physiological fact is important, because it helps us to realize what a fatiguing process reading really is for the child. The average person reads an ordinary page in two or three minutes. To do this about 150 of these eye move-

ments are necessary. Let us try to move a finger or a hand 150 times in so short a given time and then note carefully the strain that is experienced. This helps us to estimate the severe strain to which the eye is subjected continuously. It shows us that the eye is an organ designed primarily for the sight that must be achieved in rudimentary society, yet doing twentieth century work. As the book is brought nearer the untrained eye, the number of sweeps over each line decreases, more is caught at a glance, but as the page recedes from the eye the number of sweeps increases. The page, kept at a proper distance from the eye, therefore makes a greater drain upon the energy of the eye, and the child, instinctively seeking relief, brings the page nearer and nearer, until myopia, "shortsightedness," sets in. The teacher must realize how much care must constantly be exercised if children are to be kept free from eye ailments that follow in the wake of reading and study.

Regularity of Eye Movement Determines Ease in Reading

The importance of eye movement is further enhanced by the fact that, physiologically, *ease in reading is attained when motor habits are developed which direct the eye to make the same number of fixation points* or sweeps and pauses, *in each succeeding line.* But habit is itself the product of regularity. Hence in the early books, all lines on a page should be of uniform length and rather short. A cursory examination of commonly used primers shows that this rule is too often violated. Irregular and broken lines abound on pages enlivened by pictures. What is the invariable result? The eye is fatigued by the necessity of readjusting itself to a new set of moves and pauses with each varying set of lines. The sooner one

acquires a rhythmical eye movement the surer is he to read with ease, speed, and minimum fatigue. Hence, the ideal page has lines of uniform length—one and one-third times that of the average newspaper line, or 75 to 80 mm.

Causes of Eye Strain and Optic Fatigue

What is there about the process of reading which brings about this severe nervous drain and its resulting optic fatigue? The conditions are many—so many that a child's inattention during a reading lesson the context of which is not very interesting should not be regarded as an unpardonable offense. Chief among the factors which produce optic fatigue we may name the following:

1. In reading much nervous energy is necessary to adjust the eye for near accommodations. The natural tendency of the eye is to adjust itself to distant vision.

2. In order to get each succeeding phrase of any sentence into the brightest part of the field of vision, the eye moves over the lines by means of the succession of sweeps and pauses that were considered. This is the greatest single factor in nervous strain caused by reading.

3. During reading, the eye muscles are not in motion nine-tenths of the time. But, while they are motionless, they are strained, trying to hold the eye in focus, so that each visual grasp of the line will fall on the most sensitive area of the retina. This strained rest is far more fatiguing than ordinary movement.

4. In the reading position the muscles of the neck are strained to hold the head in proper position. This adjustment, when continued for a protracted period, causes an obvious nervous strain. Brain energy is thus reduced and mental vitality is lowered.

5. The forward bend of the head produces a blood congestion which aggravates the symptoms just noted in preceding causes.

6. Prolonged reading periods in ill-lighted rooms, and in seats and at desks that are poorly adapted to the children, cause myopia, which is a constant drain upon neural energy. The seriousness of myopia lies in its progressive character.

In the light of the seriousness of eye strain and the prevalence of its causes, we see the need of books that meet hygienic requirements of print and mechanical arrangement. To continue putting the prevailing books into the hands of children is to court optic fatigue, general nervousness, and myopia. We must, therefore, decide on the hygienic requirements of a book before we consider its pedagogical merits.

Hygienic Requirements of Properly Printed Books

1. *The Size of the Type Is the Most Important Single Factor.*—There is an unmistakable and an unvarying law for size of type, namely, as the type decreases in size optic fatigue increases. The effects of insufficient illumination are less marked than those of undersized type. Legibility of type is determined by a number of considerations which must be observed by the makers of textbooks: (*a*) the thickness of the vertical stroke, (*b*) proper spacing between vertical strokes, (*c*) proper spacing between the lines, (*d*) clearness of the tops of letters, (*e*) proper size. The standard for the size of type which has met the approval of most specialists in the hygiene of reading is clearly formulated by Shaw as follows: [1]

[1] Edward R. Shaw, *School Hygiene*, p. 178.

For the first year the size of the type should be at least 2.6 mm., and the width of leading 4.5 mm., as shown in this example:

Little drop of dew,

For the second and the third year, the letters should not be smaller than 2 mm., with a leading of 4 mm. Some of the more carefully made books for the second and the third years are printed in letters of this size, as shown in the following example:

Children of eight and nine should not read type smaller than this.

For the fourth year, the letters should be at least 1.8 mm., with leading of 3.6 mm., as follows:

Children in the fourth school year should read type of this size and appearance.

For some grades succeeding this, the type should be kept well above the minimal requirements for adult readers.

2. *The Length of the Line Is the Factor Next in Importance.*—Short and uniform lines, measuring between seventy-five and ninety millimeters, are demanded by most expert investigators. Ninety millimeters is most favored. A full line in this book measures about 90 millimeters. The short line saves a number of eye movements, for the eye begins each line at a point indented, and it stops at a point some distance from the end of the line. Experiments show that we have a greater visual grasp when the lines are short than when they are long. An-

other cardinal requirement here is absolute uniformity in the length of the lines.

3. *Books Should Be Small Enough to Be Held in the Hand.*—Books that are large and heavy are usually placed on the desk. The angle of vision is now changed, and the letters, becoming foreshortened, are thus practically reduced in size.

4. *The Character of the Paper Is Also Very Important.*—The most legible print is produced by making the strongest contrast between the color of the print and that of the paper. Since black on a white background forms this contrast in color, only good white paper should be used in the manufacture of school books. Unusual care should be taken to keep out of the school, books printed on glossy paper. The cheap paper with a sheen, that makes up so many of our school textbooks, gives a play of light that is most irritating to the eye. An equally important requirement demands that the paper have a minimum thickness of .075 mm., so that the print on one side will not show on the other.

Boards of Education to Standardize Books

In the light of these hygienic demands, how many class textbooks are up to standard? An examination with the aid of a millimeter measure and a magnifying glass will show to principals and teachers an amazingly low percentage. But books properly printed need not cost appreciably more. Only when Boards of Education have adopted a standard will publishing concerns refrain from continuing the publication of books that rob eyesight and cause an inexcusable nervous drain. Indifference to matters so vital to health and efficiency is unpardonable.

Suggested Reading

Dresslar, T. B., *School Hygiene* (Macmillan Co.), Ch. xv.

Freeman, F. N., *Experimental Education, Laboratory Manual* (Houghton Mifflin Co.), pp. 95-108.

Gray, C. T., *Deficiencies in Reading Ability* (D. C. Heath & Co.), Ch. xi.

Huey, Edmund B., *Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading,* Chs. ii, iii, xx, xxi.

Judd, C. H., *Reading: Its Nature and Development* (University of Chicago Press), Chs. iii, iv.

Taylor, J. S., *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading* (Macmillan Co.), Chs. ii, viii.

Wheat, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co), Ch. iv.

CHAPTER III

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF READING

Inner Speech in Reading

We come now to a more complex problem, the psychology of reading, which concerns itself with the processes by which visual percepts of words stir auditory and vocal motor images and thus lead to recognition and acquisition of thought. Just as soon as a visual image of a word is recognized in consciousness an auditory image of it arises, and these two prompt an instantaneous verbal motor expression. Hence the conclusion of investigators is, "In visual reading the auditory and the motor centers are at work along with the visual center."

Lip Movement in Silent Reading

Purely visual reading is not normal. We have here, therefore, an explanation of the prevalent practice, in early reading, of lip movement. This accompaniment to reading is not acquired by the children; it is the result of the natural tendency to give expression to any idea in the mind. No sooner does the mind become conscious of the meaning of the symbol which it sees than the organs of speech strive to express it. Reading without lip reaction is an acquired art, a habit to be cultivated. But, even when there is no apparent lip movement, there is a muscular reaction going on in the throat, which can readily be detected by the trained observer and his instruments.

The preceding discussions concerned themselves with eye reading. In the present chapter we must turn our attention to a second form of reading—mental reading. These two forms of reading, eye reading and mind reading, must be differentiated very clearly. Because the child, who is learning to read, speaks and hears his native language, he has a feeling for its structure, form, and cadence. It follows, therefore, that most of the expression, the stops at sense pauses, the intonations, etc., in the child's speech, are due to associations formed long ago. In reading *since he* the child naturally expects "he therefore"; likewise *not only* calls up "but also"; *as*—"as"; *neither*—"nor"; *if*—"then," etc. The mind, therefore, makes a liberal contribution to what the eye brings; a reader perceives mentally more than the eye brings in any one sweep. Since this mental expectancy makes the mind a more rapid reader than the eye, it follows that one often has the meaning of a sentence before the eye has formed a retinal image of the end of it.

Relation of Rate in Reading to Thought Acquisition in Reading

The practical teacher may now ask, "Why stop at the problems of inner speech in reading, and mental *vs.* visual reading?" These two questions are important, because they determine a most vital factor in reading as a process of thought-getting, namely, rate in reading. From actual observation we find that there are great discrepancies in the rate of reading among individuals; the variations show a usual ratio of 1:3, or even 1:4. In other words, it is usual to find among people of approximately the same experience and education, individuals who read three or

four times as fast as others. Germane and Germane[1] report the following variations in reading rate of sixth-grade pupils, the figures indicating the number of words read per minute: 374, 362, 238, 197, 188, 181, 174, 170, 152, 145, 125, 121, 113, 98. The most rapid reader in this group can read 3.8 times as fast as the slowest.

The impatient teacher, confronted by actual problems in the teaching of reading, may insist: What if there is such discrepancy—aside from the time consumed, what is its importance? After all, is it not more important to consider what we read and what we get out of it, than how much or how fast we read?

The answer to this query, surprisingly, is decidedly in the negative. Researches in the field have established the conclusion that, all things considered, *rapid readers are the intelligent readers,* that is, they obtain more of the thought, form more vivid images and retain the content of the text better. It is not rare to find an intelligent reader who is slow, but results of careful tests show clearly that rapid reading and effective reading are usually related as are slow reading and ineffective reading.

Why Are Ineffective Reading and Slow Reading So Frequently Related?

The reasons for the relations just set forth are simple enough. Let us sum them up.

1. *Attention Is Divided.*—Slow readers are usually addicted to lip movements and are utterly dependent upon inner speech in order to secure meaning. Attention is constantly being divided, some going to the symbols and the restimulation of auditory and vocal motor images; the

[1] Germane and Germane, *Silent Reading,* p. 29.

rest, perhaps the smaller part, is directed to acquisition of thought. Those who are relatively free from inner speech give an absolute minimum of attention to symbols and images and almost all of attention to the thought.

2. *Reading Units Are Too Small.*—Experimentally, it can be demonstrated that slow readers make more sweeps and pauses than rapid readers and secure less, of course, in one sweep. A group of slow readers showed the following number of letters in a succession of eye sweeps: 3, 5, 3, 2, 5, 5, 1, 4, 0, 3, 4, 1—an average of 3 letters to a sweep. The rapid readers made the following record: 11, 11, 12, 3 (at end of line), 5, 9, 12, 9, 5 (at end of line)—69 letters, exclusive of the last sweeps, an average of almost 10 letters per sweep. But the larger the sweep, the greater is the unit of thought acquired at any one time hence the more effective is the final mental grasp of each sentence and each paragraph.

3. *Slow Reading May Be Indication of Imperfect Mastery of Symbols.*—Unless symbols are thoroughly mastered, thought will not be acquired fully and retained effectively. The reader who has achieved thorough control of symbols, secures thought more readily and has the thought of the earlier part of a paragraph more vividly in mind than the slow reader, for whom the ideas in the initial part of the text are not so recent.

It is possible to find a whole community of children who are more rapid readers than others of the same grade but who are nevertheless less intelligent readers. An analysis of such a situation shows that in the earlier grades, the school authorities stressed mechanics of reading at the cost of content. The result of such practice is to produce rapid readers who lack power of comprehension.

Further Significance of Increased Rate in Reading

From the very earliest grades teachers must encourage pupils to attain the highest reading rates of which they are capable. There are reasons, aside from the relationship that exists between rate and intelligence in reading, to make reasonably rapid reading highly desirable.

1. *Modern Life Gives New Significance to Speed.*—There is much to be read to-day. List the reading matter of quality that is available for any citizen to-day—newspapers, magazines, government reports, books in public libraries, publications by social improvement agencies, the technical and vocational magazines—endless resources for self-improvement and growth. Too few hours are devoted to reading at best. It is important to read as much as is consistent with comprehension in the little time at our command.

2. *Rate Is a Measure of Reading Skill.*—The pupil who has acquired a stock of reading habits that constitute reading technique reads more rapidly than his classmate whose habits are in the process of forming. By the reading rates of the individuals in a class it is often possible to measure their control of the mechanics of reading.

3. *Rate in Reading Is Susceptible to Training.*—Speed increases more rapidly in the lower than in the upper grades. It is common to find that the progress in reading rate in the third and fourth grades is about three times the progress in the fifth and sixth grades. This progress in rate parallels the progress that pupils make in the mechanics of reading. By the end of the sixth year a pupil's reading habits are usually fixed. Drill exercises in grades higher than the fourth bring gratifying increase in rate; a 25 per cent increase is a conservative hope and a

50 per cent, not extravagant. The average silent reading rate for eighth-grade pupils as shown by the Monroe Silent Reading Test, is 240 words per minute for continuous properly graded material.

4. *Longer Reading Units Are Developed.*—Progress in speed and in mechanics of reading is accompanied by gratifying increase in power to make longer eye sweeps in reading. The longer reading unit, we saw, gives more rational reading, for larger successive subdivisions of ideas are caught. Ability to comprehend text, unlike rate, increases almost uniformly throughout the grades. There may be accelerated growth at the end of the sixth year, due, probably, to emphasis that is usually laid on content when the mechanics of reading are mastered.

5. *Rate in Reading Is Important for Effective Study.*—In studying, a given object must be attained within available time. The pupil who has developed the highest rate of which he is capable will perform the reading involved in study in a minimum of time and with a maximum of result.

Conclusions for Teaching

The relation of rate of reading to intelligence of grasp implies important conclusions for methods of teaching in both early and later grades. To these we must now address ourselves.

1. *Begin with Words or Larger Language Units.*—The first inference that we can make is that a method of reading must start from the very beginning to teach instantaneous recognition of words as wholes either individually or as part of larger language units, phrases or sentences. Any method which begins reading by teaching the child to

examine each word, to analyze it into component phonograms, to sound each phonogram, to combine these sounds to get the word, places a premium on lip movement and unnecessary audible aids, and promotes slow, ponderous reading, which develops into habits that defy later efforts at correction. Our objection to synthetic methods is based on their teaching practices which develop these very undesirable reading habits. Methods like the Aldine, the Merrill, the Story Hour, the Winston, the Progressive Road, and, in a minor way, the Ward Rational System, seek to avoid these dangers.

We recognize words as we recognize people, places, our personal belongings, by appearance of the whole and not by the synthesis of constituent parts or of specific characteristics. How do we recognize the pen on the table as ours? Surely not by noting the size, the color, the peculiarities of markings, the bend of the clip? Only when doubt arises do we indulge in this analysis of characteristics. The appearance of the pen as a single unified thing determines recognition. So, too, only when the word is new should the child be encouraged to undertake a phonic analysis of it.

2. *Enriched Imagery Is Not Necessary in Word Recognition.*—Popular practice in teaching a word like *ball* seeks to establish as many sense associations with *ball* as possible. The children are told to see the ball, to touch it, to pass the hands over its surface and to hear it as it rebounds. The justification urged is that the richer the imagery the more effectively and vivid will the recalled image be. Are these claims borne out by fact? What images are called up when we see the words *man, mountain,* or *moon?* Not the word itself but its context will

determine the imagery that will be aroused. Spend more time on well motivated drills in word recognition than on relating each new word with a variety of sense experience. Begin with known and attractive content. Let the new words occur and re-occur in natural and unoffending context and the pupil will learn to recognize them instantaneously. This procedure makes for economy of time and directs effort to the most crucial aspect of word recognition.

3. *Seek the Thought. Stress Silent Reading.*—Since the mind reads faster than the eye, we must teach children rational subordination of symbol to thought. We must make the eye as sensitive and efficient a tool for thought-getting as the ear. In listening to a speaker, if there is nothing unusual about his choice of words or pronunciation, we are hardly aware of the words; we busy ourselves with the thought. We have thus trained ourselves to neglect auditory words and seek meaning. In the same way, the method of reading in the elementary school must seek to make the eye so sensitive to meaning that in scanning a page it becomes as unconcerned with printed words as the ear is with auditory symbols. The child must learn that words are like our eye-glasses—they are of greatest service when we look through them, not at them.

The Fetish of Oral Reading.—If we grant this conclusion, we must then change the relative emphasis on oral and silent reading, and give to the latter the prominent place accorded the former in present-day practice. Not only do we place too great an emphasis on oral reading, but we begin it too early in the school life of the child. The popular superstition is that plenty of drill in oral reading in the classroom prepares for effective silent read-

ing in the post-school days. Let us examine this contention psychologically.

Oral and Silent Reading Psychologically Differentiated.—Efficiency in silent reading is determined by the development of a mental habit to associate instantaneously the visual image of the word with the thought. In all oral reading the visual image must associate itself with the auditory image; these two bring a recognition of the idea represented by the symbol. The final link in this long chain is the verbal-motor expression. Graphically, the associations in these two forms of reading may be expressed in the following symbols: Silent Reading: Visual Image—Thought. Oral Reading: Visual Image—Auditory Image—Idea—Verbal Motor Image. The brain centers that operate and also the mental associations and stimulations are different in the two forms of reading. An overemphasis on oral reading, therefore, trains the mind to make the long circuit, and thus unfits the individual for efficient reading in later life. The earlier we develop the short-circuit habit, visual image—thought, in our children, the sooner are we making them efficient and intelligent readers. Many writers would go so far as to insist that oral reading should be the exception rather than the rule, and should be tolerated in the class only as an expression of a thought gained or sentiments enjoyed during the lesson. This is obviously an extreme attitude.

These educators justify their plea for a postponement of oral reading on the ground that the steps in oral reading are: (1) instantaneous recognition of symbols, (2) extraction of the thought, (3) expression of the thought. Hence no effective oral reading can take place unless the child has developed reliable ability and undoubted mastery of

rapid symbol interpretation and thought extraction. This capability must necessarily come after long, laborious effort. It is because children are asked to read before they have acquired these abilities in full measure that real expression is not only impossible but is undermined permanently. The blame for the stiff, stilted, artificial oral reading of the elementary school must be laid at the door of premature oral reading.

4. *Emphasis on Proper Rate and Mechanics of Reading.*—It is essential that from the first, grade children should be taught to read silently at reasonable speed. The earlier the mastery of symbols, the easier is it for the child to acquire a more rapid rate. Mastery of mechanics and power to acquire thought are coördinate aims in the teaching of reading. Standardized silent-reading tests considered in a later chapter of this book give teachers definite norms of speed and power in mechanics of reading which they may reasonably expect their children to attain.

The means by which speed may be increased are set forth fully in Chapters XI and XII. We must stop here to note that much can be done to increase the unit or the span of perception. The time necessary to perceive a letter is usually sufficient to perceive a short word. The longer the span of perception, the fewer are the sweeps and pauses per page, the more rational is each visual grasp and the more rapid is the reading as a whole.

5. *Discourage Lip Reading and Word Pointing.*—A final lesson from our discussion of the psychology of reading is to repress lip reading, word pointing, and all kinds of auxiliary but unnecessary movements. The practice of pointing to words soon becomes a time-consuming habit

which leads to word reading and emphasizes slow, silent reading with vocal-motor accompaniments.

Much can be done to discourage lip movement in silent reading. Judd reports [2] that an adult lip reader practiced daily for four weeks reading with lip movement checked. His rate when he began was 2.3 words per second. After earnest effort to increase the eye span, to decrease the auditory and vocal motor images, and to read phrases and ideas but not single words, he attained a rate of 4.7 and even 6.2 words per second depending on the character of the text. Lip readers are as a group less efficient readers than non-lip readers.

Remedial measures for lip readers are simple. (1) Let pupils know why lip reading is undesirable, give them reason to feel confident that the habit can be eliminated, and the motivated effort of a mind really set in the desired direction will produce gratifying improvement. (2) Much silent reading must be given, especially in the earliest grades (see page 194). (3) Limiting the time for silent reading tends to emphasize thought and minimize the individual words. The lip reader has therefore fewer words to form. Speed tends to inhibit lip movement. (4) Give mechanical aids. Ask the child to keep his finger on his lips or to bite his lips together in an effort to check lip movement.

Conclusion

Present-day knowledge of the psychology of reading has had a determining effect on the methodology of reading. It teaches, clearly, that reading is essentially a process of thinking; that ability to find thought is the final aim of

[2] C. H. Judd, *Reading: Its Nature and Development*, p. 159.

classroom teaching of reading; that emphasis must constantly be put on silent reading and the elimination of those practices which retard, however slightly, rapid and effective selection of thought from the printed page. As pupils develop power to read, they acquire the most potent instrument for intellectual growth and spiritual enrichment.

Suggested Reading

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Germane and Germane, *Silent Reading* (Row, Peterson and Co.), Chs. i, ii.

Gray, C. T., *Deficiencies in Reading Ability* (D. C. Heath & Co.), Chs. iv, vi, ix, xiii.

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Taylor, J. S., *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading,* Chs. i, iii.

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CHAPTER IV

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS IN THE PEDAGOGY OF READING

When Shall Reading Be Taught?

A popular question of the day among theoretical educators is when to begin to teach elementary reading. Their conclusions show remarkable unanimity, for writers like Dewey, Huey, Laing, McMurray, Mary Putnam Jacobi and Parker insist on the elimination of reading in the first three years of school life. One naturally questions their position. In the main their arguments are fivefold:

The Hygienic Considerations

We saw the dangers of eye fatigue and eye strain in reading, how ill adapted the eye seems to be for the purposes that present-day civilization imposes upon it. Hence it is argued that the young child should be relieved of the attending physiological dangers in learning to read. But we must realize the inevitable fact that the eye must be accustomed to read and must learn to adjust itself to twentieth century needs. If books were printed in accordance with hygienic prescriptions the attending dangers would be greatly minimized.

Psychological Considerations

The opponents of reading in the first three school years base their position on psychological grounds. First, they argue that *coarser adjustments must be made before the*

finer ones, that the fundamental muscles must be controlled before the delicate peripheral ones. The muscles of the body in general, those in the arms, hands, legs, etc., should be made sensitive and ready to coördinate with the mind before we develop in the child the ability to attend to the more delicate coördinations.

Their second psychological objection is that *concrete knowledge must be acquired before symbols are taught.* Hence the opponents of early reading insist, why not teach the facts of nature, of local geography, of industry, of manual work, before giving the symbols for thought-getting in reading.

That bad mental habits are developed is another argument of this school. The child is too young to concentrate upon the technique of reading, hence mind wandering is encouraged, and the powers for application are undermined. These exercises in symbol interpretation are opposed to the cravings and interests of the young child.

A final psychological objection which these educators advance is that, *with the very young child the whole process is an unintelligent one.* The processes in reading are too difficult, is the argument; all mental activity goes to the recognition of symbols, rather than to the thought which these symbols represent. They insist that this explains the frequency, among children, of expressionless reading, constant stumbling and word reading, rather than thought acquisition—in a word, the wrong habits of reading that defy the teacher's effort.

Social Considerations

These opponents of early reading tell us that for sociological reasons the prevailing custom of initiating the

young child into the mysteries of symbols is unsound pedagogy. Life to-day, they argue, is *industrial* and *manual.* Bookishness is not a characteristic of modern social organization. *Reading is too individual a process* for the young child, whose life and outlook are intensely self-centered. We must teach the social duties and social relations of life.

This seems an imposing indictment against our system of primary reading, but our very social life is the main justification for elementary reading in the beginning of school life. The efficiency of our mails, the universality of the newspaper, the multiplicity of worthy publications, the unprecedented facilities of the public libraries, and cheap printing make reading a necessity that must be satisfied without delay. Reading and writing need not monopolize the first three years of elementary training; there need be no reading fetish. But withal, reading deserves an important place in these grades. It is inappropriate to apply the term "bookishness" to such work. Once the child has learned to read, he has a source of infinite joy and rich culture. In spite of all that is said to the contrary, there is nothing individualistic in this pleasure. Reading is a very social process; it acquaints the child with the thoughts and the lives of others, and breaks the confining bonds of the child's personal life.

The Culture-Epoch Theory against Early Reading

This theory of recapitulation, when applied to education, has been interpreted to mean that each individual should be taken through those stages through which the race passed in its development. The early life of man concerned itself with the concrete; it knew only oral speech;

man himself was ear-minded, not eye-minded, in language. Hence, these educators conclude that all language work in the early grades must be exclusively oral. While all these characterizations of early society are true, we must, nevertheless, realize that, to prepare the child for present and future life, we teach the needs of existing and not of past society.

Pedagogical Considerations

The advocates for the postponement of the teaching of reading bring, finally, pedagogical considerations to bear out their contention. Why spend so much time and effort on a task that can be accomplished in less time and to greater advantage when the child is two or three years older? The child is a motor animal, with interests that are manual and practical. He turns from the early phases of reading because the work is too formal and lacks vital motive. Here, too, we find an array against early reading which is not as true and as far-reaching as is often supposed. True, reading can be taught the child of ten with greater ease than the child of six, but so can any other serious subject; therefore, why not postpone all school work? The child is a motor animal, but, despite this prominent characteristic, he has other interests as well. He is curious; he loves the story; he has a dramatic sense, a feeling for rhythm, etc. Although the child experiences no personal hunger for reading, the problem, approached carefully, need not be the arbitrary lesson it is made out to be. The love for the story, and the desire for the acquisition of a practical art, the social use of which the child sees daily in his immediate life, serve to motivate early reading lessons. By erroneous methods and unattractive

devices, teachers often kill the vital interest which children bring to this work. This argues, not the postponement of reading, but a decided and immediate reform in methods of teaching reading.

Conclusion

Despite these attacks on the prevailing custom of teaching reading in the introductory grade, experience indicates that it is wise to begin reading as soon as the pupils' capacities permit—usually at the age of six. The reasons are many. *First,* reading is the open sesame to the ideals and inspirations of the past. Such a heritage should not be delayed longer than is absolutely necessary. *Second,* reading is a highly motivated process to every normal child. At the age of six, young people begin to feel that the lack of reading ability is a distinct hindrance in life. Therefore, *third,* the mechanics of reading, entailing a mastery of arbitrary symbols, should be taught just as soon as this knowledge looms up to the child as a necessity. Attention flows more freely with a proper mind set. *Fourth,* speech at the age of six is still in the process of habituation; written forms correlate rapidly with the child's growing oral language. *Fifth,* we have ample evidence that modern pedagogy has devised means of successfully overcoming the difficulties which children experience in learning to read.

And, *finally,* there is a compelling condition of school administration which counsels early introduction of the reading technique. A cursory perusal of the educational statistics concerning elimination and overage shows that an alarmingly increasing number of children joins the industrial and commercial ranks at the end of the sixth

school year. If reading is postponed to the beginning of the fourth year, we shall send out a large percentage of the school population woefully handicapped. In the final view, the practical needs of the community, rather than subtle psychological analyses, must determine the organization of educational systems and their curricula.

Basic Aims in Reading

There are two contending conceptions that govern methods of teaching reading to children in the early grades. One strives to make reading a formal or mechanical process, the other looks upon reading as a cultural or educational influence. The method that a teacher follows gains its life and spirit from the point of view that she takes toward her work. Unconsciously she interprets every phase of her work in terms of it. We must, therefore, consider the contending viewpoints in teaching reading.

Formal Reading	*Educational or Thought Reading*
1. Reading must always be looked upon as an *end in itself.*	1. Reading justifies itself only because it is a *means* to a *higher end,* namely, *thought.*
2. Reading is a *technical process,* and as such is concerned with giving the child a *mastery of the tools,* the symbols, by means of which we gain thought. Aside from this technical ability the teacher of reading need have no other care nor concern.	2. Reading must be looked upon as a *process of thought-getting,* of learning to express thought, of increasing one's language stock. The mastery of symbols must be incidental and of subordinate interest.

Formal Reading	*Educational or Thought Reading*
3. Since reading is a mechanical process, it must be taught as an *arbitrary process* through hard memory drills. No reason, no motive need be given.	3. As a thought-getting process, reading must always start from a *conscious need* felt by the child. His love for the story, his desire to know how to read, will rationalize the work.
4. To speak of *getting thought without making reading a process of symbol interpretation is absurd.* Children leave school hampered in their ability to extract the thought from the printed page because their knowledge of symbols, phonetics, word analysis, is so vague that the deficiencies in the formal aspect of reading make impossible progress in the rational.	4. *True, thought-getting is simplified* and even made possible only in proportion as the symbols are habituated. But the child should begin by reading for thought. All technicalities must be based upon the work thus mastered.
5. That the sentence is the unit of mental grasp, and the word the unit of visual grasp is the oft-quoted law; hence a mastery of words must precede a mastery of the sentence.	5. If the aim of reading is to develop the ability to extract thought from the printed page, and if the sentence is the unit of thought, then the child ought to be taught to read sentences first and then to master the words that make them up.
6. Reading must be a synthetic process; begin with a study of phonetics, phonograms, sounds; combine these	6. Teach reading as an analytical process; the sentence must be learned before the word, and the word before

Formal Reading	*Educational or Thought Reading*
so that the child learns to read any new word. Typical of the methods conceived in this spirit is the Gordon or the Pollard Method.	the phonogram. The Winston Method, The Story Hour Method, The Aldine, The Progressive Road are typical illustrations.

Conclusion

Despite the sharp line of demarcation that each school seeks to draw, we see that neither has a monopoly of pedagogical wisdom. If we unite these two tendencies we evolve a composite method which insures thoughtful, expressive reading, fluent and smooth, and which also develops that mastery of the technique of symbols that is absolutely essential. A sound method has its inception in the desire to acquire thought. The text of this reading is then analyzed and made to yield material for the study of phonograms, which are basic in independent word recognition. Thought is thus made the motivating force in reading, and mastery of the technique is given adequate and ample recognition. To set up these two ends of reading in sharp conflict is absurd and gives evidence of failure to recognize their mutually supplementary functions of *mechanics* and *content.*

SUGGESTED READING

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CHAPTER V

THE BASIC METHODS OF PRIMARY READING

Evolution of Modern Methods of Primary Reading

The student of methodology is bewildered by the numerous and diversified methods that have been evolved for teaching children to read. This multiplicity shows clearly that the problem of primary reading is an exceedingly difficult one, and that many of the current methods are ill adapted to meet the needs of the practical classroom teacher. In this vast array of methods we can discern six that are basic in so far as they contribute a distinct idea in the progressive development of methods of teaching primary children to read. These basic methods are grouped under two main headings, the Synthetic *v.* the Analytic Methods. The subdivisions of these can readily be seen from the following table:

Table of Basic Methods of Primary Reading

Synthetic Methods			Analytic Methods		
			Word Basis	Thought Basis	
Alphabetic	Phonic	Phonetic	Ward	Sentence Unit	Story Unit
				Farnham	McCloskey
All Modern Methods Are Combinations and Modifications of These					

The simplest sequence in this evolution of method is the historical one; we shall examine each of these methods critically in the chronological order.

The Synthetic Methods

The Alphabetic Method

The underlying principle of the alphabetic method is that the combination of letters will give the word which is the unit of utterance. The method, therefore, teaches the alphabet and then proceeds to develop mastery of monosyllables by a method of oral spelling. *c, a, t,* cat; *m, a, n,* man, etc., are learned by verbal repetitions, reënforced by visual appeals from the blackboard or charts on which these symbols are written or printed. This is the time-honored method which has taught mankind how to read.

Limitations of the Alphabetic Method.—Despite its great service in the past, the alphabetic method must be set aside to-day for many serious reasons. (1) It is thoroughly unpedagogic, beginning, not with what the child knows, with words, or sentences, but with unknown names of meaningless letters. (2) It is illogical in its basic principle, because only combination of the *sounds* of the letters will give the word; a combination of the letters *d, o, g* will give *dee, o,o,o, g,g,* but never the word "dog." The more logical procedure is, therefore, to teach the sounds and make the names incidental. It is true that children will eventually infer the sounds of letters from their names, but this makes accidental the knowledge that should be focal in the course of instruction. (3) This method is exceedingly tedious because of its absolute disregard of content. (4) A fourth indictment of the

method is its undue difficulty. Actual test will soon convince the teacher that children will remember the word-pictures "father," "mother," "doll," more readily than the names of the letters *f, h, t,* etc. The reason is simple. In the case of the word-picture the child associates an arbitrary symbol with a known name, but in the case of the letters both name and symbol are unknown. (5) And finally, all the tenets evolved in the study of the psychology of reading are violated: vocal dependency is encouraged, reading rate is seriously reduced, and silent reading, reading for thought, is utterly neglected. A reading method must begin with vital content rooted deep in the life of the child.

It is because of these serious defects that the alphabetic method has been relegated to the pedagogical scrap heap. It does not follow that the alphabet should not be learned. It is an aid in spelling, and very necessary for business purposes, for filing of records, for finding data in directories, telephone books, dictionaries, etc., and should not be neglected. But the alphabet should not be imposed before the second year, when its need is felt in spelling.

The Phonic Method

The basic fallacy of the alphabetic method suggests the underlying principle of the phonic method, which holds that since the sounds of letters uttered rapidly will give the word, teaching must begin with the functions, not the names, of letters. In the final analysis the method is like its predecessor, except for the fact that the child is taught to call the letter by its sound rather than by its name. In all other respects, the same rigorous, synthetic process is followed, with the same utter neglect of content

and emphasis on form. The Emma K. Gordon Method is a modern application of this principle of reading.

Despite the fact that this principle found wide recognition and application in comparatively recent times, it must not be inferred that the phonic method is a modern inspiration. Ickelsamer is usually credited as the originator, in 1534. He taught reading by an interjectional method, which associated letters with animals whose characteristic sounds suggested the sound of the letter, or with pictures that suggested the sounds of letters. *R* was shown with a picture of a dog whose angry *brrr* suggested the sound of *r; sch* was seen on a picture of children chasing geese, because the sound which would frighten the animals suggested the sound of *sch*. The Jansenites (Port Royalists), Buno, Rousseau, Basedow, Pestalozzi, are only a few of a host of educators who elaborated the phonic method and introduced the play element, very often to a ludicrous extent.

Advantages of the Phonic Method.—For this system of reading we must urge that (1) it is more logical to teach the functions than the names of letters; (2) it gives the child a better trained ear and a better articulated speech; (3) it is an aid in spelling, even in our unphonetic language, and (4) it teaches the child how to attack a word whose form is absolutely new to him.

Limitations of the Phonic Method.—But this method, when applied to English, is very often ineffective. In the first place, it makes the function of letters focal, but the sound of letters is precisely the least fixed element in our language; the sounds of letters vary to an exasperating degree. Our thirteen vowel sounds can be expressed in one hundred and four different ways: the sound of ō is

found in *float, yeoman, sow, sew, soul, sole, beau, owe,* etc.; *ea* boasts of an equally rich variety of sounds. In many cases a letter may become altogether silent.

A second serious limitation of the method is found in the fact that it may encourage stammering among young children whose coördinations are still unformed and who show a tendency to linger on labials, dentals, and liquids. Any method which teaches reading by a process of phonic synthesis aggravates a tendency which the teacher must assiduously strive to eliminate. For this reason students of methodology and expert investigators like Huey and Hughes are unalterably opposed to this method. Bell calls the school that uses phonic synthesis a nursery for stammering. Class teachers bring practical evidence which bears out this indictment against phonic synthetic methods.

Thirdly, it is apparent that this method is no less unpedagogical than the alphabetic, because it, too, begins, not at the point of contact between the child and reading, but at the most painful point, phonics. This explains why the child finds it exceedingly difficult to retain a set of arbitrary sounds for a series of meaningless symbols. Experience proves that names of letters are retained more easily than their arbitrary sounds.

And last, all that is said in the last objection to the alphabetic method applies with equal force to any synthetic phonic system. Here, too, speed is retarded, auditory images are exaggerated, lip reading is encouraged and reading for thought is subordinated to "reading off" a set of symbols.

Final Estimate of the Phonic Method.—The method of phonic synthesis is not a reading method. It is merely

a systematized attempt to give the child a mastery of technical elements in the reading process. As such, it becomes a necessary part of a method in reading, but not a reading method itself. The skillful teacher uses it merely as a preparatory drill, "a gymnastic which is aimed to sharpen the perception for words and sounds."

The Phonetic Method

The enthusiasts for the phonic method endeavored to save it from what they considered the most important weakness, namely the variability of the function of letters. They endorsed the basic principle, and the general procedure of the phonic method, and then set themselves to the task of making variable sounds permanent. To do this they evolved a complex system of diacritical marks, and distorted forms of letters. Since the sounds of *a* vary, then the sound of *a,* in *bake,* was represented as *ā,* in *back,* as *ă,* in *far,* as *ä,* in *ball,* as *â,* etc.; *ā* was to be taught as differing from *ă* as much as it does from *b* or *d.* If *c* has two sounds, then c represented one sound and ɛ the other. Much ingenuity was spent in evolving these "fixing marks," which differed, of course, in each new system of phonetic reading that flooded the school market. The only difference between a phonic and a phonetic method is the "fixing signs," or the diacritical marks. Reading matter took the form, of,

bo̯u̯qu̯ɛ̯t, ne̯ɣ̯h̯bōrho̯ȯd, läu̯gh, zīnɛ, çitĭ

Estimate of Phonetic Method.—It is obvious that while this method gains by fixing the variable functions it loses by increasing the number of symbols almost threefold. It

makes no other contribution to the phonic method, and is, therefore, not a whit above it in the pedagogical scale. Fitch and Garlick, among others, find fault with the method because, they argue, it is "illusive and postpones the real difficulty." When the symbols are printed the child can read, but just as soon as a book without these hieroglyphics is presented, the child is lost; he was made dependent on a set of aids. This argument against the phonetic method is not borne out by actual practice, nor by psychological evidence. Children who for two years have read in a book printed with all the diacritical aids will, when given a page without these markings, read without noting the absence of the auxiliary sounds. This actual result finds its explanation in the fact that we read words as a whole, not by the synthesis of component sounds or symbols. In the final analysis, the phonetic method contributes a device, not a rational system of reading.

The Analytic Methods[1]

Essentials of a Modern Method

1. *A Vital Point of Contact: Reading to Begin in Real Content.*—All synthetic methods, whether alphabetic, phonic, or phonetic, suffer from the same inherent limitation which militates against ultimate success. They all fail to realize that reading cannot be made vital to chil-

[1] In treating these methods of teaching reading to beginners the author merely suggests the underlying principle, the general organization and an estimate of each. Teachers and supervisors who desire a more detailed knowledge of any of these methods must secure the teachers' manual by the author of the respective method and a full complement of the primers and the readers.

dren unless it begins in their lives, in their needs, and in the problems that present themselves for urgent solution. No child feels an urgent craving for a mastery of letters or sounds; all normal children are consumed by a desire for the story, with its alluring "once upon a time." A modern method of reading begins with a language unit that represents some idea or image. Just what this language unit shall be is a source of much contention. To some, therefore, the word is a proper beginning; to others, the sentence with its complete thought seems a more rational initiatory step, while to a third group, the story must be the means of introducing the child to the art of reading. Typical of these three views, we find the Ward, the Farnham, and the McCloskey methods, respectively. We shall presently turn to a detailed consideration of each of these.

2. *Reading an Analytic Process.*—A second requisite of a modern system of reading is that it should begin by a method of "look and say." The child is shown a word or a sentence, and is taught to recognize this, not by a synthesis of letters or sounds, but by the appearance of words as wholes. Reading is therefore analytic in its nature.

3. *Phonic or Phonetic in Its Analytic Development.*—A third essential insists that, after the mastery of words by a purely sight method, the child should learn the sounds of the symbols that are used. Whether the method be phonic or phonetic, it is absolutely necessary that the study of symbols be an outgrowth of the stock of sight words that the child mastered.

4. And finally, a modern reading system must inculcate a set of proper reading habits that give the child ready

mastery of the technique of the reading process. From the very beginning, the child must read for thought, must associate symbol and idea and must read at a rate that insures maximum speed consistent with comprehension.

A method of reading that possesses these four basic essentials is not inevitably a satisfactory one. But a method that violates any one of these principles is so lacking in sound pedagogical organization that it makes impossible the development of proper habits in reading.

The Ward or Rational Method of Reading[2]

1. *Underlying Principle.*—The Ward Method holds that a word is recognized by its appearance as a whole, but words are also the unit of oral speech; hence, all reading should begin by a mastery of a stock of useful sight words. The Ward Method is frequently advertised as a sentence method. While it can readily be turned into such, we must remember that the author of the original method says in his manual: "The Rational Method is a peculiar combination of the word and the phonetic method. . . . The word method is used first as principal, because of its value in developing a habit of thought-getting, and afterward as auxiliary."

2. *Organization of the Method.*—In its general organization the method consists of four parts: (*a*) sight reading; (*b*) the phonetic drill and the blend; (*c*) the reading in books; (*d*) writing and spelling.

(*a*) *Sight reading.* The method begins by teaching a list of about eighty sight words. Typical of these are: *ail,*

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[2] Edward G. Ward, *The Rational Method in Reading.*

all, old, an, and, day, ill, take, well, and *boy.* These words are presented in script on the blackboard, in short sentences. These sentences, *I see, I see you,* etc., are unrelated, and aim merely to introduce the words which are always focal. The words selected are such as will lend themselves to useful and varied word drills. The drills on these words continue for a number of weeks until instantaneous recognition and permanent fixation are attained. The children can now read these words from lists on the board, from perception cards, or in sentences.

(*b*) *The phonetic drill and the blend.* In order to teach the child to recognize new words independently, the phonetic elements are then introduced. This part of the lesson begins with attempts at ear training, in which the phonetic element to be taught is introduced at various places in a story. The phonogram, for example, *f,* is either put on the board and the children told its sound, or the sight word *fold* is subjected to analysis and the children made to recognize that the word has two parts, *ffff* being the first. The early phonograms include *f, l, m, n, r, s, ā, ē, ō, ing, ight.*

The constructive part of the lesson is now introduced. The children, knowing the sounds of *m, r, s, l, f, ight,* are taught to blend these into *might, right, sight, light, fight,* etc. After the phonogram *old* is learned the children blend old elements to produce *fold, mold, sold,* etc. Thus the ear is trained, oral speech is improved, phonetic elements are learned, the power for independent word reading is given, and the basis for more accurate spelling is laid. If the initial stock of sight words is well chosen, the child has at the end of the first half-year a list of over three hundred words, which enable him to read with a fair de-

gree of ease, stories beyond the abilities of children who were taught for a whole year by a synthetic method.

(*c*) *The book.* At the beginning all work is limited to script. A transition is now made to the print, either by associating print and script forms, or by associating print form and thought. In the former procedure the teacher puts on the board,

I see you

I see you

and leads the children from the known script to the unknown print. In the latter method, the teacher prints on the board, "I see you. Do you see?", and tells the children what these symbols represent. They thus learn the new form, print, by the "look and say" method, which taught them the original form, script. After a few preliminary transitional drills, the children recognize the print form and read it as readily as they do the script.

All this work in phonetics is taught with diacritical marks. The three lines of work, sight words, phonetic analysis, and the blend, are carried on through the first three years. In the early part of the second year all the basic phonograms are taught and supplementary readers are introduced. Toward the end of the second year the diacritical marks are eliminated.

(*d*) *Writing and spelling.* Simultaneously with the reading the child begins his writing and spelling. The method is the same laborious and imitative procedure that is prescribed in most methods of primary reading. It is difficult to understand why spelling, which is purely formal

and has no relation to reading, should be made part of most reading methods. The inclusion of writing at this early stage is justified by the principle of motor appeal and multiple sense teaching, but the attending dangers are many. Writing entails too many delicate movements, and too fine a degree of coördination to be begun without a specially prepared series of graded penmanship drills designed to develop habits of correct posture, form and control. The penmanship drill must be more than a side show of an ambitious system of reading.

3. *The Readers.*—As is to be expected, a method that centralizes all effort on word recognition presents a primer that is dull, meaningless, and often inane. The round of foolish repetitions of the Ward primer reads, "I see, I see you, Do see, Do see me, Do you see me? Do see Jack, What ails the lock?" But the later readers and the supplementary books are a pleasant and welcome contrast.

4. *Estimate of the Ward Method.*—Despite obvious limitations the Ward Method shows a step in the right direction. It begins with that part of language which the child uses, though not with the most vital element in the child's speech. It fosters independence in word recognition, gives training in better articulation, develops a more sensitive ear, aids later spelling, and does much to reduce the tedium of phonetics by its careful organization and gradation of the mechanics of reading. But we must remember that it is a method that is mechanical in its inception and mechanical in its whole development. Its highest aims do not transcend word recognition. It therefore lacks inspiration and enthusiasm. The only interest it arouses is the interest that the pupil feels in his prog-

ress. Huey, however, regarded it as the "most valuable method in effect to-day, though not in line with the changes to be urged for the elementary school."

The Sentence or Farnham Method [3]

1. *Underlying Principle.*—All sentence methods are based on the principle that, in reading, as in all perception, a unit is recognized as a whole, and not by a synthesis of its composing elements. If reading is a process of thought-getting and thinking, then the unit must be an idea. But the language expression of a unit of thought is a sentence; hence rational reading must begin by teaching children to read sentences.

The sentence method found its advocates in Comenius and Jacotot. Not until 1885–1890 did it gain currency in the United States through the efforts of Farnham.

2. *The Method.*—As elaborated by Farnham, the sentence method entails a procedure somewhat as follows: The teacher makes sure of a thought basis for reading by talking about a number of objects on her desk. "What is this?" she asks, holding up a pen, and the child answers, "This is a pen." "What have you?" she asks, as she makes the child take the next object, and the child replies: "I have a knife." After a few periods of this concrete language work, the teacher writes on the board the answers to these questions, and tells the children that she has written what they said. Every child knows, therefore, that the first sentence reads, "This is a pen," and the second, "I have a knife." The teacher now secures smooth and easy reading of these two sentences. She points to the one and then to the other, and requires the children to give evidence of

[3] Farnham, *The Sentence Method of Teaching Reading.*

the idea in each by action rather than by reading. The nouns and the pronouns are now changed; the verbs give way to others equally appropriate, until the children can read a number of sentences and recognize a long list of useful words. In this way the child acquires a stock of sight words.

3. *Estimate of the Sentence Method.*—A cursory examination of this outline of the method reveals its weaknesses. The daily lessons lack system and gradation; the sentences are insipid and absolutely unrelated to the child's life. What urgency is there to read, "This is a pen"? The method boasts of its emphasis on the objective, but the practical teacher realizes that it is a stupid and unnecessary use of a concrete method. Children who do not know such words as *pen, knife, I, you,* etc., should be taught oral English, not reading. Farnham himself tells us that in this method "the teacher's faith and patience may be severely tried." The sentence method teaches us that correct reading is reading for thought, but in its practical application it becomes as uninspirational as the Ward Method, but without the compensating skillful and careful gradation. In the final analysis, the method is merely an introductory device, for it must soon fall back on phonic drills in its endeavor to teach independent word recognition.

4. *Modified Sentence Methods.*—Huey and McMurry and other writers have urged modifications of the unrelated sentence method. They advise the selection of some central theme for the day's reading text. If the children have enjoyed unusual exercises in their morning assembly this circumstance is made the theme for oral composition and self-expression. At the end of the period the whole discussion is summarized in five or six short related

sentences. These are put on the blackboard, and the class has a living and interesting reading text. The suggestion is valuable, for the most enthusiastic reading lessons are often not in the book, but find their authorship in the class or the teacher. But here, too, we have only a suggestion worthy of occasional application, and not a general method, for there is no guarantee of either systematized and progressive work, or of an ability to recognize new words independently.

The McCloskey Method: The Story Method[4]

1. *The Plea for the Story.*—A system of reading whose systematic and graded organization and whose serious application of all sound principles of reading give it the dignity of a true method, was elaborated by Miss Margaret McCloskey. The method begins with an eloquent plea for literary appreciation. It studies the child at the age when school life begins, and finds him at a stage in his language development that is characterized by an almost insatiable craving for the story, by an imagination that glows in rich imagery and lives in fantastic environs of its own making. The child approaches the reading book, the source of new stories, with all the anticipation that he would feel for a gift. How bitter must be the disappointment when the child finds in his primer, "Oh, see the cat, the black cat," or "Hop and skip," "Skip and hop," "Run and jump." If the teacher seeks to refine the emotions of the child and cultivate its imagination, then she must begin the reading lessons with an appealing story.

2. *The Story as the Initial Step in the Reading Method.*—The McCloskey Method begins its series of

[4] Margaret McCloskey, *McCloskey Primer.*

reading lessons with a cumulative tale that delights the child with its round of rhythmic repetitions. The teacher prepares the children for the story of the kid that "my father bought for two pieces of money," and for the chain of tragedies in which the cat ate the kid but was in turn bitten by the dog which was hit by the stick which was burned by the fire that was put out by the water which was drunk by the ox which paid the final penalty when the butcher slew him. The informal narrative is followed later in the day by the formal story with its rhythmic repetitions of,

A kid, a kid, my father bought
For two pieces of money,
A kid, a kid.
Then came the cat and ate the kid
That my father bought
For two pieces of money, etc.
A kid, a kid.

These lines are repeated frequently. By competitive devices, dramatizations and recitations, the interest is kept up in the story until it is known by heart.

The teacher now suggests the pleasure of reading such a story by oneself, and thus offers motive for the first reading lesson. The first sentence is put on the blackboard and the children who know it are invited to read what was written. After easy and smooth rendition is secured, the pupils learn to recognize *father* by its place in the context, then by comparing the word *father,* written in the corner of the board, with the full sentence, and finally when it is shown on a perception card by itself. The other words are taught in the same way until the children can read any

sentence containing these words, for example, "For two pieces of money my father bought a kid"; "The cat ate the kid," etc. The round of repetitions gives plenty of drill, yet the children are not kept too long on one sentence. After the first story is thus mastered, word by word, two other cumulative tales are taught in the same way before the end of the first half year. The children are now the proud possessors of an enviable reading vocabulary. If the teacher will list all the words in these three stories and then do the same to any story found in a synthetic method third reader, she will find that the children know a stock of sight words that enable them to read the story she selected.

3. *The Transition to the Book.*—The McCloskey system seeks only one form of association in reading, namely symbol and thought. It is therefore opposed to making the transition from script to print by comparing the two as is done in the Ward Method. It presents the story of "The Kid" in print, and teaches the child to read this new form in the same way as he learned the script. Most authorities sanction both forms of transition, that is, through association of symbol and idea, and through association of script and print, just as they approve beginning with either print or script, since each has its advantages. The only restriction that must be made is the simultaneous presentation of print and script, for the child is bewildered by the multiplicity of symbols.

4. *Phonics.*—We have seen, thus far, how this method makes reading a process of thinking and emphasizes content rather than form. The author of the method realizes the need of phonic work that gives the ability to recognize new words, and results in better articulation and sharper

auditory perceptions. With this end in view, the sight words that are known are analyzed and the phonograms carefully taught. *Man* gives *m* and *an; rat* gives *r* and *at.* The child is now required to form his own blends of these phonograms to produce the words *ran* and *mat.* The work in phonics is well graded and thoroughly organized for the teacher. The method is therefore well balanced, for it realizes the coördinate position that must be accorded to the content and the mechanical aim in reading.

5. *Language Lessons.*—A final endeavor of the McCloskey Method seeks to establish an intimate correlation between reading and oral and written language work. After the third story is well known an interesting topic is selected from the reading matter, or the child's experience, and is used for oral composition. The topic is then summarized in a few sentences, which contain the words that the children learned in the course of the reading. By suggesting the desirability of being able to write the subject of the day's lesson to a friend, the teacher motivates the first lesson in written composition. The introductory sentence is written on the board in large, clear characters, and the *modus operandi* is explained. After giving a vivid visual impression, the sentence is erased and volunteers are called upon to write the sentence. In case no child is ready, the same sentence is again written on the board, explained and erased until some children can reproduce it from memory. A pupil who errs in any letter or word must erase his effort and try over again until the sentence is written as a whole, correct in every respect. At the end of the first period, only two or three successful efforts may be found. At the end of the third lesson, about twenty children can write the introductory sentence. The work

continues in the same imitative manner, seeking direct association between symbol and idea until the children can write the whole composition. A foreign-born graduate of the 1A class is the proud author of the following composition:

THE LITTLE HEN

One day a little red hen found corn. She asked the cat to help her plant the corn. Then she asked the rat, the dog and the pig. All of them would not help her so she did it herself. She asked them to help her water the corn but they would not. When the meal was baked into bread they all wanted to eat it. But the little red hen said, "No! you cannot help me eat it; I can eat it myself."

Although the child knows no letters by name, and cannot justify the various punctuation signs, capitals, indentations, etc., he is learning to use symbols as means of expressing his thought. But the teacher must not forget the caution that was urged in the study of the Ward Method, for such premature efforts at writing may lead to the development of most objectionable habits in penmanship.

6. *Estimate of the McCloskey Method.*—To answer the skeptic who doubts the efficacy of such a method, we must urge pragmatic proof. This method has done excellent work in foreign sections of Newark, its pedagogical birthplace, and in New York. Teachers who conceive the ultimate aim of reading to be literary appreciation must approve this system. But the formalists, on the other hand, can pick no quarrel with such a method, for its emphasis on phonic analysis and synthesis guarantees as great a mastery of the symbols of reading as any purely mechanical method like the Ward. The strength of the McCloskey Method lies in its proportionate emphasis of

the two basic aims of reading and its skillful application of modern reading standards. From a narrower aspect, this method is not free from faults. Teachers complain that they are handicapped because the method is not developed beyond the work for the initial year. The absence of a printed manual entails unnecessary work by teachers. The content is often ill adapted to the foreign-born city child, whose words are few and whose comprehension lies wholly within urban topics. The McCloskey Primer uses *quench, shaven and shorn, forlorn, tattered and torn*—expressions beyond the pale of such children's vocabularies. The stories tell almost exclusively of country themes that are not within the scope of these children's experience. Not one child in fifty in a school in a foreign section of New York knew any but the slang meaning of "A kid." These mechanical limitations in the organization of the method have left gaps that other reading systems have very successfully bridged. It is for this reason that such methods as the Winston, Progressive Road, Story Hour, Merrill, Free and Treadwell and the like have supplanted the McCloskey books. But the spirit of the McCloskey Method lives in all of them.

Present Tendency

Analytic reading methods are unmistakably in the ascendency to-day. But there is a growing discontent in many progressive quarters with the extreme story method. It is argued that too much time is spent leading a whole class to memorize a story. Then what is done to the story —a real, living, inspiring thing? It is read sentence by sentence; its words are learned in and out of context; some of its words are subjected to phonic analysis. And

finally, there remains an unpleasant memory of a much mutilated story.

For this reason, many of the newer content methods begin with jingles, rhymes, or songs that are learned in a few minutes with no apparent effort. Through these simple units of thought enough sight words and phonic power are developed to enable children to read the story. Now the story is read for what it has to tell. It is remembered, not as the instrument through which words and phonograms were taught, but as a whole, rounded narrative—an exceedingly agreeable experience.

Suggested Reading

Carpenter, Baker and Scott, *Teaching of English*, pp. 98-121.

Goldwasser, I. E., *Method and Methods in the Teaching of English* (D. C. Heath & Co.), Ch. ii.

Hall, G. Stanley, *How to Teach Reading* (D. C. Heath & Co.).

Huey, E. B., *Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading*, Chs. x, xi, xii.

Laing, Mary E., *Reading: a Manual for Teachers*, Chs. vii, ix.

McMurry, Charles A., *Special Method in Reading for the Grades* (Macmillan Co.).

Taylor, J. S., *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading*, Ch. v.

Teachers College Record, January and September, 1906.

CHAPTER VI

MODERN METHODS OF PRIMARY READING [1]

The last chapter traced the evolution of modern methods of teaching primary children to read. The path is long and circuitous, with many pitfalls and discouraging features to both children and teacher. The synthetic methods made reading a purely mechanical process, and sought to give the child a perfect mastery of symbols. To accomplish this end, they began reading with a study of the alphabet, or the sounds of the alphabet. Syllables, phonograms, single letters—all were fused into words as soon as possible. Early reading began, not with real content and thought appeal which give to language a throb of life, but with letters and phonograms, the static, stupid phase of speech. The child's mind was occupied with the problems of first recognizing the phonograms and then synthesizing them into real words. When these two processes became habit, real reading, reading for thought, was introduced. But the exclusive attention to word forms and elements of words, the unrelenting drills on synthesizing the mechanics of written language made reading so

[1] In treating these methods of teaching reading to beginners the author merely suggests the underlying principle, the general organization and an estimate of each. Teachers and supervisors who desire a more detailed knowledge of any of these methods must secure the teachers' manual by the author of the respective method and a full complement of the primers and the readers.

thoroughly formal that true reading, reading for thought, was almost completely undermined.

These methods soon caused a reaction when applied by intelligent teachers. The habits in reading that the children were developing were so positively detrimental that methods diametrically opposed to these synthetic systems were evolved. Reading was now made an analytical process; it began with words, or larger language units, and only when these were mastered, were the study of word formation and the independent recognition of new words taught by analyzing the sight words already known. But mastery of sight words, reading of isolated words, soon became as monotonous and inane as the reading of syllables and phonograms. The desire for thoughtful, expressive reading from the very beginning brought a sentence method and finally a story method. Only when the child can read the sentences naturally and feelingly is he taught the component words. But, in reading, the sentence is never subordinated to the words in it. The child is never allowed to read a sentence unless he has read it silently, has asked about any word that puzzles him. There must be no hesitation, no loss of thought. The words read at sight in sentences are then taken up, analyzed into their component sounds and the mechanics of reading taught in special drills.

Modern Methods Tabulated

In the evolution of primary methods that was traced in the last chapter, we considered the alphabetic, the phonic, the phonetic, the word, the sentence, and the story methods; all these passed in review, each making its contribution toward the correct method of teaching, each

typifying some tendency, each embodying a definite principle. These methods are the units; they reflect the types. The list of present-day reading methods is long and varied, but each reading system is either a combination of two or more of the basic methods studied in the preceding chapter, or a modification and elaboration of some one of them. The following table attempts to classify the more popular of the modern methods of teaching children to read; recent systems not in the table are analyzed in Chapter VII. The system of grouping is the same as that offered in the table on page 39. A careful analysis by the student of the table given on page 63 is now advisable.

Emma K. Gordon Method [2]

From the table it can be seen that no system of reading brought out by enthusiastic teachers can claim the honor of absolute originality. The Emma K. Gordon Comprehensive Method and Pollard's Synthetic Method of Reading and Spelling have little in them that was not noted in the analysis of a purely synthetic phonic or phonetic method. The former begins its system with the belief that "thorough work in phonics lies at the base of all rational teaching of reading," and shows the teacher how to carry out a severely phonic and synthetic method. It boasts of its contempt for diacritical marks, of its emphasis on family words, like "talk, chalk, walk, balk," of its phonic games which are only revivals of those played by Ickelsamer's children in the days of 1534. It fails to see that it cannot be a comprehensive method if it emphasizes form to the exclusion of thought.

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[2] Emma K. Gordon, *Comprehensive Method of Teaching Reading.*

MODERN METHODS OF PRIMARY READING

(Systems not in this table are analyzed in Chapter VII.)

Synthetic Methods		Analytical Methods		
Phonic	Phonetic	Formal	Thought	
		Word	Sentence Unit	Story Unit
Gordon	Pollard		Farnham	McCloskey or Newark
		←[1]Ward		
		←[2]Summers→		Progressive Road
				Natural Method or Culture Primers
			←[3]Horace Readers→	Mann
			←[3]Finger	Play→
			←[3]Aldine→	

[1] A combination word and phonetic method.
[2] A cross between a word and a sentence method.
[3] May be classified as either sentence or story method because the sentences or rhymes are more or less related in thought.

Pollard's Synthetic Method [3]

In Pollard's Synthetic Method of Reading and Spelling, one finds a scheme that is purely phonetic, "almost arrogantly so." The mechanical mastery of words; the constant use of diacritical marks; the use of sound games and phonic pictures (*f* is the symbol of cats at war, *sh* of a child being put to sleep); the personification of the letters (small letters are boys, while capitals are men, etc.);

[3] Rebecca S. Pollard, *Pollard's Synthetic Method of Reading and Spelling.*

all these are typical of the archaic devices and organization to which this method has constant recourse.

Estimate of Gordon and Pollard Methods

Both these methods can teach children to read. But *any* method, or even *no* method, can; hence ultimate ability to read words and sentences is no criterion. "How agreeably, how thoughtfully, how naturally, how quickly can they do so?" are the questions that must be answered. These two systems possess all the strength inherent in any phonic method but we must reject them because in their emphasis on reading as a synthetic process, they are destructive of the right habits of reading.

The Maud Summers Method [4]

This method is more pretentious and more modern. It endeavors to attain a literary level, to teach language, to make reading a pleasurable process, but not at the expense of the mastery of symbols. Its intentions are meritorious, but its practical organization often fails to reach this high level.

Underlying Principle of the Summers Method.—The method is based on three educational principles, which it persistently tries to carry out: (1) *Images are necessary.* The child must have clear images of his natural environment, of the elements and conditions mentioned in the reading matter, otherwise the verbal symbols fail to symbolize anything rational. (2) *The mind recognizes the whole of things before its parts.* The order of teaching must therefore be sentences before words, and words before phonograms. (3) *The self-activity of the child must al-*

[4] Maud Summers, *The Summers Method.*

ways be aroused. It is the active coöperation of the child, the continued expression of his self-activity which will determine not only the thought he acquires, but also the mastery of symbols that will be developed. These principles determine the organization of the method.

The Organization of the Summers Method.—The method has two important elements: *the thought* and *symbols in reading.*

The thought is the most vital factor in reading, for the ability to associate symbol and idea is determined by the value and the interest which the idea has for the child. Thought is emphasized through: (1) Action sentences. Dramatization is the important contribution of this method. Since the child is an intensely motor animal, he enjoys acting out his ideas. The words and sentences that begin this method are such as abound in children's games. (2) Nursery rhymes form a second important part of the content of primer and blackboard reading. Children have a rhythmic sense that is unmistakable in their games and their songs. Poetry for the child must not only be rhythmic, but it must breathe mystery to stir his imagination. Nursery and nonsense rhymes fulfill both of these conditions. They are learned and recited because they train in good articulation, cultivate a cadence in language, and afford pleasurable reading matter. (3) To keep thought in reading uppermost, this system makes observational lessons part of its method. What the children see and do in their nature-study lessons and in the manual training periods is made the topic for discussion. This is summarized and becomes the subject-matter of the reading lesson from the blackboard. The books are replete with illustrations of artistic merit, in the hope of making

thought and action clear. (4) The method, in its literary endeavor, assigns regular readings by the teacher to the class of those stories that form the literary heritage of the race. The children listen to these, repeat them, dramatize them, and read them, in summarized forms, from the blackboard.

The second element of the method deals with the *symbols in reading.* Although the Summers Method attempts to attain a literary level, it does not neglect the mastery of phonograms, which it regards as coördinate with thought acquisition. The method therefore emphasizes voice and ear training, drills in phonic analysis of sight words, practice in synthesizing known phonograms, careful gradation and progressive repetitions in word building—in short, the varied forms of exercises designed to develop mastery in the mechanics of reading.

Estimate of Summers Method

Despite all its emphasis on thought, this system starts by teaching children a list of sight words, like "run," "play," "jump," "hop," words that can be dramatized and used for word-building later on. The early reading lacks the natural and interesting content found in later lessons, and busies itself with such repetitions as "Run and jump," "Sing and jump," "Run and sing," or "Jack, run and sing," "I run and sing," etc. Its dramatization often saves it from becoming nothing more than a weary word method.

The Aldine System [5]

Basic Principle.—This method, organized by Spaulding and Bryce, is another system based on the simple principle

that reading is a process of thinking which must leave the child richer in thought and knowledge. In actual organization it wavers between a sentence and a story method.

Organization of the Aldine Method.—This method may be divided into five principal elements: (*a*) the story introducing the rhyme, (*b*) the reading of the rhyme, (*c*) the study of the picture, (*d*) dramatization, (*e*) phonic analysis and blend.

(*a*) *The story introducing the rhyme.* Progress in the Aldine Method is measured by the complete mastery of a set of rhymes used for reading, language lessons, dramatizations, phonics, and word-building. The rhyme is introduced through a story which the teacher tells the children; the story gives an interesting background to the rhyme, suggests it a number of times, but the tale is not memorized as in the McCloskey Method. The first rhyme is introduced by the following story, which is told by the teacher:

The Spring Story

Once upon a time a little boy and his sister asked their mother if they might have some money and go to the store and buy some candy.

"No, dears," answered Mother, "I think you have had all the candy that is good for you to-day. Run outdoors and play."

Out walked the two children and sat down on the porch.

"I don't want to play," growled the boy.

"I think we might just have a little candy," whined the girl. So they sat on the porch and pouted.

The little birds flew from tree to tree, building their

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5 Spaulding and Bryce, *The Aldine Readers.*

nests and singing. They were so happy because Spring had come.

The squirrels frisked and chattered on the lawn. They, too, were glad the winter was over.

Even the yellow daffodils in the garden looked up and smiled at the warm sun.

Everyone seemed happy but our pouting boy and girl.

Along the street came a crowd of boys and girls, running, laughing, and shouting. They were just as happy as the birds and squirrels.

When they saw the cross little boy and girl, they shouted: "Stop pouting. Don't you know Spring is here? Now is the time to play and be glad."

Then a big girl, who was leading, called:

"Come away,
Come and play."

All the children took up the cry and shouted:

"Come away,
Come and play."

They were having such a good time that our boy and girl could feel cross no longer. Smiles chased the frowns from their faces. They jumped up and ran off with the other children, laughing and singing:

"Come away,
Come and play."

(*b*) *The reading of the rhyme.* The rhyme is now memorized, read in script from the board, from printed charts and from cards placed in the hands of the children. "Come away, Come and play," "Run with me, To the tree," etc., are examples. The reading must be smooth, easy, rapid, and thoughtful.

(*c*) *The study of the picture.* To make the thought stand out more vividly each lesson has its picture. These pictures the children are allowed to study in an attempt to infer the story. The pictures are artistic and are thus a source of keen pleasure. Detailed questions, asked by the teacher, elicit a series of answers which give thought background to the rhyme and serve as examples in oral composition.

(*d*) *Dramatization.* To make the reading more natural, and prevent stilted classroom rendition, every stanza is dramatized as it is read. In the case of the first rhyme, "Come away, Come and play," one pupil is designated as a leader. This child skips through the aisles, choosing his companions by touching each and calling, "Come away, Come and play."

(*e*) *Phonic analysis and blend.* The sight words thus learned through the rhymes are now analyzed, and serve as a valuable basis for phonetic drills. The consonants are taught separately by consonant cards, in association with a sight word; one side of the card is [run / r] and the reverse side is [R / r]. If the child cannot sound *R,* he is shown the side that has the word *"run"* on it. The vowels, on the other hand, are not taught alone, since they vary and take their sound from the group in which they are found. From the stock of initial sight words the children build a list four or five times as long as the original one; thus, the *ome* of *come* enables them to get *some* and likewise *run* gives *gun, fun, sun,* etc. They also learn to analyze new words phonetically. The method is exceedingly well organized, moves along rapidly, and has a complete equipment of reading charts, phonic charts, etc.,

which are not only designed for class reading, but also for profitable individual seat work.

Estimate of the Aldine Method

An analysis of the organization of this Aldine System shows that it is a skillful attempt to embody all those principles which seek to make reading synonymous with thought getting. It begins at the point where reading touches the child—the story. The cadence of the basic rhymes which appeals to the child's innate sense of rhythm is seized on as a means of teaching children a useful stock of sight words in rational and pleasing association. But independent word recognition is steadily kept in view; a carefully planned series of phonic exercises achieves this end. When followed by an enthusiastic teacher the results are gratifying indeed. The manual is a good treatise on reading, and the primers are well organized and illustrated. The great danger of the system is that, in the hands of a dispirited teacher, it degenerates into a stupid sentence method. In the final analysis the Aldine Method is a sentence method; only the skillful handling of the introductory stories by the teacher saves it from the weaknesses inherent in a pure sentence method.

The Finger-Play Method [6]

Underlying Principle.—Another system, closely allied to the Aldine Method, is the Davis-Julian Finger-Play Method. It, too, begins with the hypothesis that, to read for thought, one must begin with thought. The foundation of the reading matter is a series of rhymes, based on familiar nature facts, and used in connection with

[6] Davis and Julian, *Finger Play Readers.*

finger plays. But, unlike the McCloskey Method, the purpose of this system "is not to gain memorized reading, but to acquire independence through power in phonics." The reading text is, therefore, only a natural means of introducing phonics.

Organization of the Finger-Play Method.—The Finger-Play Method has four important components: (*a*) the thought basis, (*b*) sight reading, (*c*) phonics, (*d*) extensive correlation.

(*a*) *The thought basis.* Unlike the Ward Method, no list of unrelated sight words is used to introduce the child to sight reading. The charming story of the life and work of the bee forms the initial lesson in reading. The beehive is brought into the room, the bees themselves are the all-absorbing topic of the day, and their very song is sung. Any sentence about bees that the children invent to express their interest in the lesson is written on the board by the teacher, and is read by them after her. At the end of the first lesson, the class can read *bee* and *beehive,* distinguishing them by their varying lengths. The succeeding lessons begin with the song of the bees, or the game of the children in the beehive, as they recite the first rhyme, "Here is the beehive. Where are the bees? Hidden away where nobody sees." The children, then closing their fingers into a fist, continue: "Soon they come creeping out of the hive, one, two, three, four, five"; at each count a finger is opened, until the five bees fly away. A dramatization, in which all the children save five form a beehive and allow the five bees to fly away as they recite the complete rhyme, is one of many pleasant devices of the method.

(*b*) *Sight reading.* The sight reading follows, in the main, the procedure noted in other systems. The rhyme

is mastered first; then phrases, words, sounds, and their reconstruction into words, form the order of succession.

(*c*) *Phonics.* The Finger-Play Method, unlike other methods, begins its phonic work at once. The first sight word, *bee,* is used as a basis for phonic analysis into *b* and *ee,* and for their phonic synthesis into *bee.* The work in phonics is well graded in progressive repetitions and is designed, by the end of the term, to give the child a knowledge of most of the useful phonograms, and to develop a gratifying ability in phonic analyses and blends.

(*d*) *Extensive correlation.* Another strong element in the organization of this method is its extensive correlation. Music is made a helpful basis in phonic exercises; a living interest in nature is developed through its nature-study context; building the beehive, folding papers into "chicadees," etc., numerous drawings, are forms of manual training that afford excellent seat work; the games and the dramatizations are pleasant forms of physical exercise for the children; the early emphasis on writing is another link in the long chain of correlations.

Estimate of Finger-Play Method

Stripped of all its devices, this method is really an analytic-phonic reading system. The first concern of the authors seems to be to evolve a series of well-selected and graded phonograms; their second concern is to fit an agreeable subject-matter to these phonic elements. Through songs, games, dramatizations, manual work, and nature appeals, the content is skillfully made to cover the early phonic structure. Some teachers complain that in the latter part of the primer the round of repetitions grows monotonous. But these graded repetitions insure early in-

dependent reading, so that the children are soon ready for supplementary texts and varied reading matter. The later readers are excellent in context, organization and artistic design. The illustrations are superb.

The Horace Mann System [7]

Underlying Principle.—A method of reading which has attracted deserved attention is the Horace Mann System. We must consider it carefully, in order to place it properly in the list of methods for primary reading. Its underlying principle is, "Let thought lead. . . . Reading, after all, is an affair of thought, imagination, emotion, and expression." Not only are the initial sentences related in thought, but the successive lessons are so interrelated in theme and vocabulary that they are designed to promote constructive thinking.

Organization of the Horace Mann System.—From the very beginning the teacher is cautioned to see that all reading is properly motivated for the children, that is, that they feel a personal hunger to read; that they know the words reasonably well; that the theme is part of their experiences and cravings; that the preparation reveals only that which will stir curiosity, but conceals enough to lead the children to read to learn, rather than to learn to read.

The reading text is introduced through various media, each of which guarantees an interesting thought basis. In one situation, the medium may be a *Labeling Process.* A picture or an object with its descriptive words is hung before the class. In the ensuing language lesson the teacher leads the class to associate the symbols with their

[7] Hervey and Hix, *The Horace Mann Readers.*

objects. In the next lesson the symbols recall their respective objects. *Story-telling,* in which the teacher puts recurring sentences or phrases on the board, is another device for introducing sight reading. The natural repetition of these expressions affords a drill which enables children to recognize, first, the sentence or phrase, and then the component words. *Reading by position* is also used. A known rhyme is read and the words are learned by their position in the memorized context. *Silent reading* is still another form of sight reading. A given sentence is put on the board. If it is a command, the teacher executes it and the children infer what the written sentence says. If it is a question, the teacher answers it, and the children construct the interrogation. *Context reading,* in which the children read a sentence of known words and supply an omitted word, is a favorite means of teaching new sight words. *Games* and *songs,* in which rhymes or stanzas are learned, afford excellent means of memorizing texts, which are read, as in the other systems, at sight.

In every lesson there is, therefore, a thought basis for sight reading, and every means has been taken to make the reading expressive and the phrasing correct before phonic analysis receives attention. This method then posits the principle that to neglect phonics is to fail to develop independent reading; to focalize attention on phonics is to develop ability to recognize words but not to read. Having made reading an affair of thought, it now concerns itself with organizing, grading, and vitalizing phonic elements. All phonograms find their origin in the reading text, and receive ample drills through wise repetitions in succeeding reading matter. Drills in ear training, enunciation, phonic analysis, and synthesis are integral parts of each

of the progressive series of lessons. However, this method does not place emphasis upon learning to recognize the greatest possible number of sight words, but it puts stress, rather, on the power to work out new words, independently.

Estimate of Horace Mann System

This bold outline of the organization of this reading method shows that it contains no new theory nor a new suggestion to modern methodology. All that it attempts to do has been done by reading systems in use to-day. But its eclectic character, its wise application of all sound principles and devices for teaching reading, its consistent call on the child's self-activity, its graded and applied work in phonics, and its excellent manual, which is a treatise on reading, undoubtedly leads to its adoption in many schools and enable it to achieve successful results in the classroom.

The Progressive Road to Reading [8]

Underlying Principle.—A system of reading unanimously praised by those who use it is the Progressive Road to Reading. Like the Natural Method it is an extended and systematic application of the principles and organization as worked out in the story method of Miss Margaret McCloskey.

Organization of the Progressive Road to Reading.—(*a*) *The teaching of the story.* The teaching of the basic story comes first. The cumulative story of the "Hen and the Bag of Flour" is told by the teacher, then made the subject of conversation lessons, and finally reproduced by the

[8] Shimer, Ettinger and Burchill, *The Progressive Road to Reading.*

children, with the aid of appropriate dramatizations. The blackboard work is now introduced. The first sentence, *printed* on the board or on a chart, is read, as a sentence, then verbal relations are recognized. The children learn independent word recognition (1) by the position of the word in a known sentence, (2) by comparison with the same word in the known sentence, and (3) by reading new sentences from old words. To illustrate: The known sentence is, *A hen had a bag of flour.* The children learn the word *hen* by its position in the sentence; *hen* is the second word. At a later stage in the drill the teacher has the sentence on one board and the word *hen* on another. The children look at the isolated word, *hen,* then at the sentence, and see that the lone word *hen* looks like the second word in the sentence. When mastery of all the words in the sentence is thus attained, new sentences are constructed by the teacher, and the children are called upon to read these. *She tried to carry it home herself* becomes *She herself tried to carry it home,* this in turn is changed to *The hen tried to carry the bag of flour home herself.* So, too, the sentence, *But the hen said "no,"* becomes successively, *"No," said the hen; The hen herself said, "No"; Said the hen, "No"; The hen said, "No."* Rote work is in this way guarded against very successfully. Each child whispers the sentence which he has formed to the teacher, and is placed in one of three sections, depending upon his ability.

(*b*) *Phonics.* The second part of the method deals with the problem of phonics. The procedure is the same as in the McCloskey Method. The sight words afford the basis for phonic exercises. These words are analyzed; the component phonograms are studied and then blended. Thus,

hen gives *en;* the *p,* the *t,* the *d,* the *m* are brought from other words, and the child learns to read *pen, ten, den, men.* In this way the ear is trained, the ability to read new words is given, and the children are prepared for spelling.

(*c*) *The written language.* The third part of the method, like the McCloskey Method, deals with written language. Each grade teaches the writing of words and of sentences. A word like *it* is put on the board, explained, written again and again, erased, and then the children imitate it. Then *on, no, me, so, will,* etc., are added. New words are built on these; *will* gives *sill, till, bill, kill,* etc. When enough words are mastered, they are joined into short sentences. These are put on the board, the children study them, and, after they are erased, they imitate them. If the children fail, the sentence is again put on the board, again visualized, and again erased. Pupils once more attempt a complete reproduction. The results of this written work were noted in the course of the discussion of the McCloskey Method.

Estimate of the Progressive Road Method

The method is sound theoretically, thoroughly modern in spirit, and well graded in organization. Although in the final analysis it is very similar to the Newark or McCloskey Method, it is more enthusiastically received by teachers because it has a better selection of stories, is more systematic, continues its plan for longer than the first year, and offers a carefully elaborated manual, which readily guides the teacher inexperienced in teaching primary reading.

The Edson-Laing Readers[9]

Underlying Principle.—This reading system, formulated by Andrew W. Edson and Miss Mary E. Laing, is conceived in the endeavor to make reading the "apprehension of the thoughts and feelings expressed on a written or printed page." Attempt is made to elevate reading above word mastery, or mere oral rendition, by concentrating on three ends, namely: (1) Early facility in the art of reading, that is, instantaneous recognition of words, the acquisition of the thought they convey, and the intelligent expression of this thought; (2) the formation of a reading habit; (3) the cultivation of a literary sense.

Organization of the Edson-Laing Readers.—(1) *Reading for thought.* This system of reading develops its reading lessons through eight steps, which may be summed up briefly as follows:

(*a*) *Explanation of the story.*

(*b*) *Recitation by the teacher.* The story is told and retold by the teacher until the children either know it memoriter or have developed a perfect mastery of all its parts in natural sequence. The authors are too optimistic at this point of their system, for they tell us that "children never weary of hearing the teacher repeat a story, a jingle or a simple poem."

(*c*) *Recitation by the pupil.* The repetition of the story is continued until the children have mastered the details and the wording of the tale.

(*d*) *Questions by the teacher.*

(*e*) *Dramatization.* The dramatization of such parts as lend themselves to this form of motor expression helps to keep interest alive and to impress the story on the minds of the children.

(*f*) *Drill on words, phrases, and word-groups.* With this

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[9] Edson and Laing, *The Edson and Laing Readers.*

thought background, the child is now taught to recognize words, phrases and word-groups that occur in the story. The teacher recites the sentence in which the word or phrase to be taught occurs, and then writes that word or phrase on the blackboard a number of times. All this work is done in script. It takes two or three weeks to teach the words and word-groups that occur in the first story. At the end of that period the children can recognize instantaneously the following words:

the	that	cow
key	held	tossed
to	rat	grass
King's	gnawed	fed
garden	cat	ground
I	caught	grew
sell	dog	will
string	chased	buy

(*g*) *The story written on the board.*

(*h*) *The story read by the pupils.* The entire story is now read by the children from the board. Every word contained in the story is now known, and fluent, thoughtful reading is made the aim of these lessons. Books are usually not given to the pupils before the end of the first month, when a number of selections has been read.

(2) *The work in phonics.* The work in phonics is designed to develop accurate enunciation and to train the children to read new words. After a few selections have been read from the board, and the children have mastered a stock of about sixty sight words, phonics is introduced. The early work in phonics is not a preparation for the day's reading lesson, but usually comes after it, when the words to be phonically analyzed and synthesized are fresh in the minds of the children. The usual method is followed. In vowels, diacritical marks are employed as aids in identifying the various sounds.

Estimate of the Edson-Laing Reading System

The reading system falls short of being a pure story method. To avoid the memorized reading heard in so many classes taught by those who are inexperienced in teaching reading to beginners, this method reverts to word recognition and word reading. Despite its emphasis on reading as a process of thought acquisition, it confines the introductory reading lessons to reading words in lists or from perception cards.

The cumulative tale is overemphasized. The authors justify the repetitive tale on the ground that it affords natural repetitions, simple gradation, an interesting round of new turns to the same story, rhythmical language, and a gradual increase in vocabulary. Nevertheless, the cumulative story must not be the sole literary diet of any reader.

The content of the readers is, in the main, the traditional reading matter.

The authors tell us that one of the three distinctive features of this reading system is the absence of the usual primer, for the reading begins with the *First Reader*. But the blackboard work which is substituted is not of superior reading quality, for we see that it reduces itself to mere word reading and word recognition. The content of the First Reader often lacks the flexibility possessed by the text in the McCloskey Method or the Progressive Road to Reading. The cumulative tale in blank verse does not lend itself to as many variations as it does when in good prose. The first sentence in the first story is:

> The key, the key,
> To the King's garden!

The second is:

I sell the key
To the King's garden.

Almost no variations are possible in these constructions. Contrast this with the flexibility offered in the introductory sentence of the other methods mentioned:

A kid, a kid my father bought
For two pieces of money.
A kid, a kid.

This can be turned into:

My father bought a kid for two pieces of money.
For two pieces of money my father bought a kid.
A kid my father bought for two pieces of money.

The manual accompanying this method is very helpful to teachers, for it is replete with sound advice. The sections dealing with Silent Reading and Expression in Reading contain suggestions of undoubted worth.

The Edson-Laing reading system, as a whole, is modern in aim and purpose, although it strays from the path in specific instances during the development of its procedure.

CHAPTER VII

MORE RECENT METHODS OF TEACHING READING

The last few years have witnessed the development of a large number of new reading systems. These are, in the main, in harmony with the best principles of modern methodology, and achieve skillful blending of the effective devices that are characteristic of their predecessors, but they offer nothing new to existing theory or practice governing the teaching of reading to primary children. The table for classification of reading systems which is offered in Chapters V and VI still serves, therefore, as a basis for classifying these new reading methods.

The Merrill Readers[1]

1. *Guiding Aim.*—A reading system that will commend itself to teachers and supervisors who have strong preferences for initial reading matter that appeals to the child's rhythmic sense is the method developed in the Merrill Readers. Its guiding aim is to develop in each child an appreciative attitude towards literature through the reading of text that has real literary value. The primer gives the child his favorite rhymes and jingles from *Mother Goose* and other old nursery books. The *First Reader* adds folk tales and fables to this reading content, while the *Second Reader* enriches it by introducing the

[1] Franklin B. Dyer and Mary J. Brady, *The Merrill Readers.*

child to favorite stories in prose, verse, and dialogue. The reading matter is usually more than a slightly modified repetition of text generally found in other readers. The authors have avoided the usual danger attending an initial reading text taken from ancient rhymes and folk lore, namely, the introduction of words and expressions altogether out of the vocabulary of present speech and children's language.

2. *Introducing the Reading Lessons.*—The class is given a picture which shows two children on a "see-saw." The conversation which ensues introduces the words see-saw, up, down, etc. As these words occur they are put on the board. The discussion then turns to the probable exclamation of the child,

> See-Saw! See-Saw!
> Here we go up and down.
> See-Saw! See-Saw!

and the children learn this part of the rhyme. The "see-saw" is then conceived as a train, the children on it as being bound for a distant place. The teacher then adds, "This is the way to . . . ? What place sounds like *down?*" If *town* is not suggested, she gives it herself. The class now repeats the entire rhyme, and every pupil knows it by heart before the end of the lesson. The jingle is now played, dramatized, recited, sung until its rhymes and its music are caught.

In the succeeding reading lessons the teacher puts selected phrases on the board, and the class learns to recognize them at sight. Lines 1 and 3 are learned during the initial conversation lesson, for *See-Saw* is put on the board over the illustration of the text. *Here we go* and

up and down are put on the board, and the children learn them by locating them in the original rhyme. These phrases are written one under the other, and the children are practiced in recognizing them by the same kind of comparison with the original four-line jingle until they can read them at sight without aid. The individual words are now sought (1) by reference to their respective place in the phrase; (2) by comparison of a word, for example, *down,* written on a cardboard, with the phrase in which it occurs on the board. After sufficient drill is given, these words are recognized instantly when displayed on flash cards or perception cards. Follow-up sentences are now read by the children. The words they know become a temporary reading vocabulary, and sentences not seen before are read from the board. Thus,

> We go up! We go down!
> We go to town.
> This is the way we go up and down

can now be read. The reading must not be word recognition, but intelligent and expressive rendition of a thought. New rhymes are taught in the same way, reading vocabulary increases in the same natural processes, and reading for thought gradually develops.

3. *Teaching the Mechanics of Reading.*—The work in phonics is sought not as an end in itself, but purely as an aid in independent reading. More attention is given to ear training as a preliminary to phonic drills than in most methods. The Merrill Reading System starts its work in phonics with a clear recognition that in a cosmopolitan school population many children's auditory perception of a sound is dulled by the frequency with which incorrect

sound has been heard. It is for this reason that rhyming exercises are made so important a part of the work of early reading. The teacher asks, "What word sounds like Horner?" and obtains the expected answer, *corner,* because of the reading lessons on *Mother Goose Rhymes* that have preceded this formal work. Children are practiced not only in ready recall of words that rhyme with *thumb, Peep, Cole, Muffett,* etc., but also in reconstructing the rhymes.

He put in his *thumb*
And pulled out a *plum*

Little Bo *Peep*
Has lost her *sheep*

Old King *Cole*
Was a merry old *soul*

Little Miss *Muffett*
Sat on a *tuffet*

By a similar procedure, long lists are given by the children of words that rhyme with *will, fall, fight, day,* or that begin like the word *c*ake, *s*un, etc. These exercises are continued until auditory perceptions are sharpened and the children have developed an elementary "feel" for similar sounds.

The technical work in phonics is an outgrowth of this ear training. To teach any initial sound like *l* in *lake, d* in *day, m* in *man,* etc., or any phonogram like *ake, ay,* or *an,* the list of words that rhyme with the specific sound is recalled and isolated by a process of comparison. The teacher calls for words that sound like *lake.* The class offers *cake, take, make, bake,* etc., because it has a clear auditory image of the sound of *ake.* The teacher then shows the symbol, *ake,* which represents the sound in question. The authors of the *Merrill Readers* are opposed to the prevailing method of isolating a phonogram by a

process of exaggerated slowness of utterance. Thus, in most reading systems, *lake,* is sounded as *lll aaake,* and the children hear an English word read as it must never be spoken in actual speech. By the method of phonic comparison described above, children are taught the sound of initial consonants; important phonograms that make common monosyllabic words; combined consonants, for example, *sh, ch, th, wh;* and double consonants, like *st, sp.*

The vowel values are taught through natural association. Thus, assuming that the children can read

rode	fine	late	cute
rose	fill	lame	cure
rope		lake	cube

they are told that *e* at the end tells me to say *ode, ose, ope, ine, ate, ute, ube.* To teach the short vowels, children are drilled in instantaneous recognition of *an, in, on, up, red.* These are kept on a chart before the class all the time. The child learns the short vowel by comparing it with his standard; hence the word *hen* is compared with *red,* and is read *hen;* the word *us* is compared with *up,* and is read *us.* All words that do not follow these simple rules for long and short vowels, for example, *give,* are taught as sight words. By methods similar to these that we have outlined the class learns the "helpers," *ar, ir, er, or, ier;* the equivalents of long vowels, *ai* and *ay* for *a; ea* and *ee* for *e; oa* for *o; y* and *ie* for *i;* and finally the unclassified sounds of *oy, oi, au, ou, aw, ow, ew,* etc.

4. *Estimate of the Merrill Readers.*—From this brief analysis, the student readily sees that the *Merrill Readers* embody those principles commonly accepted as progressive

and sound in modern pedagogy, and must be grouped with the thought methods in the last column of the table of reading methods. The books are attractive in print, delightful in illustration, and agreeable in content. Although no new principle of teaching reading to beginners is evolved by the *Merrill Readers,* the authors have produced a system sound in its conception and effective in its procedure.

Elson-Runkel Method [2]

1. *Underlying Principle.*—The Elson-Runkel Reading Method puts itself on record in the very first sentence as aiming to be a thought content system. To the authors of this method, interesting material rich in story element is the chief factor in teaching children to read. They define reading as the art of interpreting the thought of the printed page. Stories that are complete in plot are urged as the starting point. How well the method succeeds is shown in the first story that the child learns to read.

THE CAT'S DINNER

Alice said, "Come, cat!
Come to dinner!"
The cat saw a bird.
The kittens saw it, too.
The bird saw the cat
It saw the kittens, too.
The bird flew away.
The cat said, "Come kittens!
Come to the barn!"
The cat went to the barn.
The kittens went, too.
The cat said, "No,
We will find a dinner."
The cat saw a mouse.
The mouse saw the cat.
The mouse ran away.
The cat went to the house.
The kittens went, too.
We said, "Come, cat, come!
Come, kittens, come!"
We gave them milk for dinner.

[2] William H. Elson and Laura E. Runkel, *The Elson-Runkel Primer.*

The initial story and the few that follow it are written down to the child. Such procedure tends to produce an artificial and stilted effect. Not all of the primer is written in this vein. We must remember that the initial reading experience of the child must be fraught with pleasure—the pleasure that comes from a natural story, told in language that is at least on the level of the child's expressional power.

2. *The Development of the Method.*—We have considered too many methods not to recognize the type of development here used. First, the teacher tells a longer story to offer a background rich in thought. The purpose of this story and the excellent illustrations is to give each child experience for comprehension of the story in the primer.

Dramatization is the second step. By this time the children know the story and understand the allusions and the meaning of terms. The third step consists of learning to recognize sentences, words, and phonetic elements. The first time a word is seen it is taught as a sight word. Thus, if *can* is a sight word, the next word having the same phonetic characteristics, namely, *an,* will be taught in comparison with the original, and the phonogram *an* is thus made known. Children then read sentences after they give evidence that they have attained sufficient power with words and phrases.

The fourth step is the final step. Now the children are given the primers, and they read the summaries, a sample of which is given above.

We see then that these four steps simply repeat and combine the procedure of so many other methods that have been mentioned.

3. *Summary of the Elson-Runkel Method: Equipment.*—This reading system has a complete equipment, and is rich in suggestion for varied and vigorous phonetic and word drills, profitable seatwork and correlating exercises. It is well organized; its illustrative material is not only decorative, but also instructive, for it enables the child to imagine what would otherwise be meaningless.

4. *Fundamental Principles.*—The revised edition of the Elson Readers has overcome the significant shortcomings of the first edition, for the system gives evidence that it is not the story told by the teacher but the story by the children that classifies a reading system among the content methods. The Elson System has won its place among content methods by emphasizing the fuller story told by the teacher and the recognition of full ideas in sentence form before directing attention to words or phonic elements.

It is a matter of regret that the primer content lacks sufficient variety, for it deals almost exclusively with nature topics and animal stories. Few urban children have the experiences necessary to make this content real and vital. This criticism, happily, does not apply to any of the later readers. The mechanics of reading—phonic recognition, phonic blend, word synthesis into sentences—receives reasonable emphasis and is uniformly made a means to the ultimate aim, the acquisition of thought. The improved method is modern in its conception and progressive in its development.

The Beacon Readers[3]

A reading system which meets the demands of the

[3] James H. Fassett, *The Beacon Readers.*

formalists in reading is the method in the *Beacon Readers.* Its aim is "to offer a set of easy reading lessons, worked out in connection with a series of graded exercises in phonetic drill." The purpose of these reading lessons is "to acquire the power of word getting and word mastery." The author of this method finds that its strength lies in the fact that it follows the principles laid down by Noah Webster in his *Spelling Book.*

Two lines of work are developed synchronously: (*a*) exercises to develop phonic power, and (*b*) exercises in reading by words and sentences. The phonetic tables are developed in the traditional way through groups of words that have the same phonic characteristics. Most of the recent reading systems strive to make their work in phonics an outgrowth of words and rhymes learned while reading interesting content. The Beacon system, however, introduces the purely formal phase in reading by teaching phonograms and word-groups that are not even remotely related to the initial reading lessons. The work in phonics is, therefore, an independent part of the reading system, deriving no significance from the reading text and contributing nothing to the power to read new words in the successive lessons in the primer.

The actual reading is taught by a look-and-say process, through words and sentences. The introductory content of the primer is artificial, and is composed of an irritating round of meaningless repetitions. Page after page runs on with the following prattle: "See Mamma. See kitty. Mamma, see kitty. Kitty, see mamma. See kitty, mamma. My kitty. See my kitty. See my kitty, mamma. See mamma. See mamma, kitty. I have a kitty. I have a kitty, mamma. Mamma, I have a kitty." This short

verbatim quotation may give no adequate idea of the dull content that is served to the children to arouse interest in reading.

The Beacon system of reading does not measure up to the reading standards that we have tried to develop in this study. Any reading system that is inspired by Noah Webster's *Spelling Book* is likely to be out of harmony with the child's interest and at variance with progressive pedagogical practice. The content of the readers, however, is rich and varied and gives the child its heritage of literary lore. The equipment of the system is ample and helpful and well designed to produce economy of time and effort.

The Riverside Readers [4]

An unusual development of a reading system is found in the *Riverside Readers.* The authors set out to compile a series of readers that would embody such literature as would cultivate a literary sense and develop the reading habit in children. It seems that originally no specific reading system governed the early books, so that a teacher might evolve any method—word, sentence, or story—and use it to teach reading to her class. The great danger in compiling reading material for a primer or a first reader is that the content is often made to fit a specific idea or a fixed need. The text is often modified to include words that rhyme or that are built on the same phonogram. The *Riverside Readers* were conceived in the hope of gathering properly graded literature for the successive grades of the elementary school course. Had the original plan prevailed, an intelligent method could have been

[4] Van Sickle, Seegmiller, and Jenkins, *The Riverside Readers.*

evolved to teach children to read the *First Reader*. *The Primer* is a superfluity, which needlessly introduces elements of weakness. The content of the *First Reader* is a skillful compilation of nursery rhymes, nature stories, cumulative tales, and simple poetry. The Primer, however descends to the oft-condemned round of

One little egg
Two little eggs
Three little eggs
I see three little eggs
Page 3

Hop
Hop, little bird,
Hop, little bird,
Hop to me.
Page 4

One little bird
Two little birds
Three little birds
I see three little birds
Page 5

Fly
Fly, little bird,
Fly, little bird,
Fly to me.
Page 6

Sing
Sing, little bird,
Sing, little bird,
Sing to me.
Page 7

The system suggested for teaching children to read is a combination of word and phrase method so often used. It has been fully described in the discussions of other methods. The work in phonics follows traditional lines.

The series of readers, excluding the *Primer,* is interesting, rich in varied literary content, artistic in illustration, and developed around rational centers and with due regard to gradation. These are qualities which commend them to teachers and which explain gratifying

response by pupils. *How to Teach Reading,* by Frances Jenkins, is a helpful manual, designed to accompany the *Riverside Readers.*

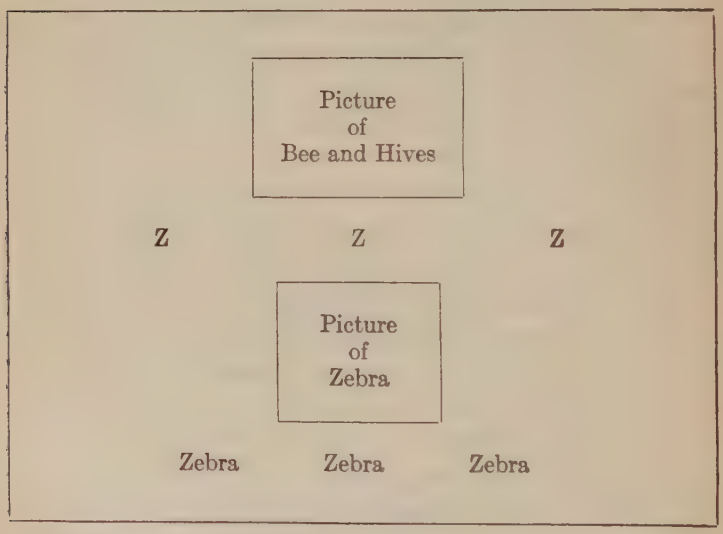
The See and Say Series[5]

1. *Basic Aim.*—A reading system which has the courage to formulate a severely formal method is the *See and Say Series.* Its underlying purpose is to enable children to master form and sound of words. It holds that the basis of all reading is independent recognition of new words. To attain this end, all energies are bent on teaching children the sounds of letters as the key to accurate pronunciation and spelling. The method is thoroughly formal, devoid of all content, and synthetic in spirit and development.

2. *The Development of the Method.*—Each sound in the English language is represented by a picture that tends to suggest it. Children come to school able to produce certain mimetic sounds: they *moo* like the cow, *choo! choo!* like the engine, and manifest other onomatopoetic abilities. The children are taught to associate the sound of *m,* for example, with a story and a picture of a mooing cow, with the first letter of *moon,* and with the symbol *m.* Thus, first, the child sees a picture of a cow looking longingly at the calves on the other side of a stone fence. The teacher tells them an appropriate story suggested by this picture. Second, the child associates the picture with the sound of *m.* Third, the sound is now associated with the letter. Fourth, drill is given on this phonic element, and children are led to realize that other words begin with

[5] Sarah Louise Arnold, Elizabeth C. Bonney, and E. F. Southworth, *See and Say Series.*

the same sound. The lesson is capped by a "Key Sentence." The children now recite, "The cow says *m*, and *m* is the first letter of *moon*." In similar manner, other lessons are ended by teaching children such key sentences as: "When a baby wants an apple he says *a*, and *a* is the first sound of apple." "When the popcorn sticks in the boy's throat he says *c* [hard *c*], and *c* is the first sound of *cat*." "Mother says *sh* when baby is asleep, and *sh* is the first sound of *shell*."



General appearance of a page in the See and Say series

3. *The Reading Content of the See and Say Series.*—One searches in vain for literary content in this reading system. In the Manual to Book I we are told that Book I is a picture book, and teaches the alphabet and the ordinary sounds of letters; "Book II reviews and summarizes the

lessons of Book I and introduces the long vowels, silent *e*, and the third sound of *a, e, i, o* and *u*"; "in Book III, definite steps are taken to fix right habits in spelling and to use effectively to this end all that has been taught in Book I and Book II. . . . All lessons which do not present a new sound provide drill upon sounds already learned." The Manuals, which outline in detail the mode of teaching every lesson in all the books, state the formal aims of each reading lesson. Typical of these aims are the following: "To teach short sound of *u*, to give added drill on the phonogram *ing* and final *s*." Page 27 of Book I presents. appearance similar to that indicated on the opposite page.

Page 137, which almost ends the *Second Reader*, has in store for the child the rare delight which comes from the perusal of

a	e	i	o	u
ă	ă	ā	ä	a
ăpple	căn	căne	stär	wall
ĕ	ĕ	ē	e	a
ĕgg	nĕt	mēte	her	caw
ĭ	ĭ	ī	i	
ĭnk	pĭn	pīne	bird	
ŏ	ŏ	ō	o	
ŏrange	nŏt	nōte	work	
ŭ	ŭ	ū	ur	
ŭmbrella	cŭb	cūbe	curl	

These pages are typical of the mechanical word reading and the fetish of sound mastery that permeates every line of this reading system. The See and Say series is

therefore as severely phonetic as many of the formal systems that are now generally condemned.

4. *Phonics.*—Despite the fact that phonics is the beginning and the end of this method, it contributes nothing new or helpful in this important part of early reading. The procedures suggested are those found in the earliest methods. It perpetuates the traditional blunders in the teaching of phonics; it forces children to read *A-lice* for *Alice,* in order to isolate the letter *a*; it is devoid of all ear training; it synthesizes phonograms into groups of letters that are either no words at all or very unusual words; it makes the mistakes found in the methods of young teachers who are slowly learning the error of their ways at their pupils' expense.

General Estimate of the See and Say Series

From this rapid survey we see that this reading method is arrogantly formal and boastful of its utter neglect of literary content. Not a story nor a rhyme enlivens its dull phonic work. These readers and their elaborate manuals formulate a complicated spelling method rather than a reading system. Unless the phonic elements can be made the natural outgrowths of pleasing and literary content, reading is not a process of thought acquisition, intelligent reading habits are not developed, and the child's interest in reading will be crushed.

Story Hour Readers [6]

Governing Aim.—A reading system that has attracted much attention in recent years is the *Story Hour Readers.*

[6] Coe and Christie, *Story Hour Readers.*

This system is conceived in the endeavor "to establish a reading habit early in life" through reading matter of charm and traditional literary worth. Much use is made of Mother Goose rhymes and folk tales, which are presented in a manner designed to appeal to the child's love for action and dramatization. But the jingle which precedes most of the reading lessons in the first and second books is designed to introduce the work in phonetics. As is the case in so many of the new reading systems, the strength of the Story Hour Method lies in its eclectic character.

The Procedure in the Story Hour Method.—1. *Telling the story.* The teacher tells the first story to her class, using the words of the text in the book. The story is carefully prepared so that the teacher knows what points to emphasize, what parts to dramatize, and where to call to her aid the devices that make the story telling effective.

2. *The dramatization.* Through dramatizations, games, rote songs, and repetitions of the jingle, the memorization of the introductory text is made incidental. The children focus their interest in the motor expressions, in the various forms of play, and in the song, but the formal text which is to become the reading system is, nevertheless, effectively memorized.

3. *Blackboard work.* The children are now ready to read their story from the blackboard. The teacher prints it for them, so that the mastery of the visual symbol may lead directly to reading from the book. The teacher asks questions which require for their answer the reading of one line of the Mother Goose rhyme. The teacher's blackboard work shows the following:

Little Bo Peep lost her sheep.
  She looked and looked
but could not find them.
  Then she went
to Little Jack Horner.
"Please, Little Jack Horner,
help me find my sheep!"
  Little Jack Horner
sat in a corner.

The teacher asks, "What did Little Bo Peep lose?" and the child reads the first line, "Little Bo Peep lost her sheep." This procedure is followed to teach the class to read the entire lesson. In the children's reading, especial endeavor is made to lead them to read each sentence as a unit, to emphasize the important words and word-groups, to help them read the entire text as a larger unit.

4. *The analysis.* This reading method does not seek to give children a mastery of all the words in the first lesson before going to the second, for such thoroughness is usually fatal. The child is taught only such words as represent real ideas, or as will readily associate themselves in the children's minds. To restrain the class from reading new matter until every word is known kills interest in the story and in the art of reading itself. The analysis consists of three parts, viz.: (*a*) recognition of phrases, (*b*) recognition of certain words, and (*c*) phonetics.

Phonetics. From the very beginning, this reading system seeks to give each pupil ability to recognize new words. Work in formal phonetics begins early, and is initiated by systematic training for auditory acuity. Ear training is given by various devices that are very rational and effective. Many of these, especially those that em-

phasize rhyming, grouping similar initial and final sounds, have already been described.

After enough ear training has been given, words that are known as sight words are subjected to phonetic analysis by comparing them to other words that have the same initial and final sounds. The usual analysis of *find* into *f* and *ind, call* into *c* and *all,* is not tolerated, for in actual speech no such artificial separation is ever heard. This phonetic step is concluded by the constructive step, the blend, in which new words are read phonetically by a synthesis of known phonograms. Throughout this phase of the work, phonics is taught through the child's inherent sense of rhyme and rhythm.

5. *Reading the story as a whole from the book.* The book is now given to the children, and with the aid of large printed charts they read the story from the page. Drill is given in recognizing phrases and words as a preparation for the silent and then the oral reading of the selection as a whole.

Useful Seat Work and Correlation

The Story Hour Readers have a full complement of auxiliary equipment. Various materials for useful busy work and for drills are provided. This variety includes tracing, cutting, and mounting pictures of sheep, etc. Freehand drawing, imaginary drawing, matching words on small cards with forms on the blackboard are emphasized. Perception cards, objects, pictures, outline forms of animals and people, charts, etc., are among the elaborate equipment designed to afford natural drill and reduce knowledge of symbols to habit. In addition to this equipment, the method provides for a rich variety of correla-

tions with other subjects, such as nature study, manual training, music, mimetic and occupational exercises, play and drawing.

General Estimate of the Story Hour Method

The books that are put into the hands of the children are artistic in illustration and design, and offer literary content more varied than in the average reading system. The progress that is made is rapid, but graded so that each step gives the child a thorough foundation on which he builds growing knowledge and increasing power. The method owes much of its effectiveness to its skillful inclusion of the worth-while principles and devices of the best systems of primary reading, and to its rational balance between the literary and the mechanical elements that make up a reading method for the introductory school years.

The Natural Method Readers [7]

A Typical Story Method.—A reading method possessed of the same aims as the Story Hour Method is the *Natural Method Readers* by Hannah T. McManus and John H. Haaren. It, too, endeavors to develop the art of reading, of extracting thought from the printed page by presenting a content exclusively of nursery rhymes. These are divided into two groups: (1) Those that are more complex in content, and possessed of a greater number of new words, and must, therefore, be taken up on a number of pages; (2) those that are so simple as to require no such extended treatment. Thus the child begins its reading experience by memorizing.

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[7] McManus and Haaren, *The Natural Method Readers.*

A, B, C,
Tumble Down D
The cat is in the cupboard
And can't see me.

This is followed by Jack Horner, Little Miss Muffett, and the round of familiar people of Mother Goose's family. While these nursery rhymes form agreeable and rhythmic content, their effectiveness is reduced by making them the sole elements in the early literary text to the exclusion of folk tales and cumulative stories.

The Development of the Method.—The development of the method of teaching children to read follows the familiar sequence, viz.:

1. Recitation by the teacher;
2. Repetition by the pupils;
3. Dramatization by the pupils;
4. Study of the words of the lesson;
5. Reading from the blackboard or from the books after three or four nursery rhymes have been read from the board.

The work in phonics follows lines equally familiar to those who know the commonly accepted development of the mechanics of reading.

General Estimate of Natural Method Readers

The faults of this reading system lie more in its omissions than in its commissions. It lacks variety of reading material, and its mode of giving reviews must be criticized as content weakness. The authors have inserted these reviews at frequent intervals, and have endeavored to evolve a story form for them. But the reviews that are

actually given are a series of disjointed sentences, devoid of sequence and story element, and usually are in marked contrast to the pleasant and rhythmic jingles that constitute the remainder of the reading text. Teachers find the reading system lacking in forms of profitable busy work that must be given to one group while the teacher gives herself to another set of pupils. This method does not point out to the inexperienced teacher the rich correlations that must be established with music, games, drawings, nature study and manual work throughout the teaching of early reading. Nor are there suggested devices for securing expressive renditions, for developing power to associate thought and symbol, or for conducting exercises in silent reading. No mention is made of the necessary ear training that must precede the work in phonics.

Judged as a series of readers, rather than as a reading system, most of the limitations are beside the mark. A system of readers assumes that the teacher knows the *modus operandi,* and needs no prescriptions and devices dealing with these problems in teaching beginners to read. There is nothing in the Natural Method Reader to exclude the most approved and the most effective practices. But teachers inexperienced in teaching primary reading are usually in need of all these devices and exercises. The illustrations in the books have artistic quality, and the mechanical elements of this system are, in the main, well planned and carefully executed. In the hands of a teacher experienced in the first year reading work and familiar with the devices of her craft, this system promises effective results.

The Winston Readers [8]

A system of readers that merits serious attention is the *Winston Readers* by Firman and Maltby. The underlying method seeks to apply tried and progressive principles of teaching reading. The content is agreeable, the illustrations artistic and helpful, the phonic and manual material complete and arranged in convenient form. A fuller study is not offered here because the reading systems thus far analyzed give ample illustration of the fundamental principles emphasized throughout this book. The author has presented a detailed study of certain reading systems, not for the sake of compiling criticism of all reading methods, but rather to emphasize the danger points and those principles now accepted as sound in the light of psychological investigation and practical pedagogical experience.

The Child's World [9]

A content reading system that appeals to many teachers is *The Child's World.* Its fundamental aim is to inculcate a love for reading through contact with texts of distinctive quality. No fixed teaching procedure is prescribed because the authors seek to encourage "variety and freedom of method." Rhyme, sentence and word method are used extensively." As in most of the effective methods, "phonics is taught in separate periods as an aid to reading."

The primer introduces reading through the story of "Baby Ray." The content of the primer and the early readers is agreeable and attractively illustrated. But the stories, jungles and poems are almost exclusively of the old

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[8] Sidney G. Firman and Ethel H. Maltby, *The Winston Readers.*
[9] Withers, Browne and Tate, *The Child's World.*

type. They tell of experiences that are of the remote past and of rural life.

There is nothing condemnatory in the fact that no new or original reading method is here evolved. This system sanctions all practices that develop reading power and desirable reading habits. Its manual to teachers gives general directions for teaching reading rather than detailed directions so characteristic of recent reading systems. A chapter on scientific measurement of reading ability by William A. McCall adds to the value of *The Child's World Readers Manual.*

The Kendall Readers [10]

The aim of the Kendall Readers is to follow "as far as may be, the order of natural development" and to reduce formal teaching through drill by subordinating the mechanics of reading to the content.

In the prebook work, the children are taught a number of Mother Goose rhymes which are recited and dramatized. These rhymes are then read and the pupils learn a stock of words in preparation for book reading. The method follows accepted practice, it begins with content that is pleasing. Children learn to read by reading. The manual is replete with helpful suggestions that guide the teacher at every point.

The early pages of the primer are disappointing. Despite the elaborate prebook work that is provided and the reading vocabulary that is built up through the reading of memorized rhymes, children are confronted with "Peek-a-boo! I see you. I see you Bob. I see you Betty.

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[10] C. N. Kendall, and C. I. Townsend, *The Kendall Readers.*

Do you see Bob? Find Bob. Do you see Betty? Find Betty. Do you like Bob? I like Bob. Do you like Betty? I like Betty." The pupils are ready for something better and should not be compelled to wait for more natural context. After the introductory pages, the primer takes on new spirit.

Too little attention is directed to silent reading and too much to the analysis of words by exaggerated slowness of utterance. Asking children to read *s-w-ee-t, g-oo-d, b-ir-d, t-r-ee,* is not especially good phonetic practice and when stressed, develops ultra dependence on auditory and vocal motor imagery.

The later readers present varied material that is interesting and attractively illustrated. The manual is worth the serious attention of primary teachers of reading.

Young and Field Readers [11]

These readers, we are told by the authors, are designed to give the child an agreeable content rather than elaborate a fixed reading method or procedure; "they depend for their value on their content and not upon pedagogical devices." But the books as elaborated give the teacher definite and detailed methods of teaching beginners to read.

Method of the Young and Field Readers.—Much is made of correlated activities. Oral composition, story telling, music, nature work, dramatization, ethics talks, games, paper cutting, and varied manual exercises are skillfully blended around central themes. In the primer, the unifying theme is Mother Goose; in the *First Reader,*

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[11] Young, Field, and Farmer, *The Young and Field Readers.*

cumulative tales like "A Kid, A Kid," frequently perform this function.

Through memorized Mother Goose rhymes, children learn to read words and word groups. These rhymes alternate with short stories and dramatizations in which the theme of the Mother Goose rhyme is adapted. The rhyme introduces words and word groups, the stories give natural and effective drill on the word forms.

The steps in a complete reading lesson are as follows:

1. Morning Song. Example: "Good Morning to You."
2. Morning Talk. Objects: To arouse interest in the theme to be read; to give basis for better understanding. Example: "Mother Goose and Her Songs."
3. Correlated Exercises. Drawing of Mother Goose's house.
4. Dramatization. Example: "Jack and Jill."
5. Word Study. Example: from song or rhyme of the morning.

   Good morning to you.
   Good morning to you.
   Good morning, good morning,
   Good morning to you.

   Method: By the usual devices children learn to recognize *good morning, to you, you, to.*
6. Reading Lesson. Example: children read

   Good morning to you, to you.

   Method: oral and silent; children are asked to point to, *Good morning, you, to you.*
7. *Seat Work.* Profitable manual activities are given for seat work and further drill.

The books are well executed in form and illustration. They show clearly a skillful application of the best prac-

tices in modern pedagogy of reading. One may not approve of the sameness of content in the first book, especially the primer, and desire more detailed and systematic direction for phonetic lessons; but, nevertheless, the readers, as a series, must clearly be classed among the superior systems that are now available.

The Boys' and Girls' Readers [12]

These readers present no fixed method but rather a composite of tried practices that lead children to learn to read a content that seems planned to give mastery of words and reading phrases. This reading system is elaborated to the last mechanical detail. The manuals are replete with discussions of methods of teaching every type of reading lesson.

The content and illustrations of these books are agreeable. The methods suggested have stood the test of class use. Devices for varied drills to insure mastery of words and phonograms are skillfully introduced. Every teaching need is anticipated and adequately met. The introduction of diagnostic tests and remedial exercises is a distinctive feature.

How to Judge Any System of Reading

In this hasty survey of the various systems of primary reading no attempt was made to study each in detail. The teacher who is teaching by any one of these methods will find every step well developed, illustrated, graded, and explained in its respective manual. These manuals are often excellent treatises on the subject of primary reading. The

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[12] Emma M. Bolenius, *The Boys' and Girls' Readers.*

aim of this and the preceding chapters is merely to give the point of view, the classification, and the final justification of each method. No one method is recommended, for the choice of a system of reading must be made by the teachers in conference with their supervisor. It is necessary, therefore, to suggest an outline of study that teachers should follow who are sincerely searching for a reading system that will most effectively meet their problem and the children's needs. The following outline is suggested:

In studying a method of primary reading, we ask:

1. What is its basic theory, or underlying principle?
2. How should it be classified?
3. What is the method?

   (*a*) What is its procedure in reading for thought? In developing independent reading through power in phonics? Are these two aims rationally balanced?
   (*b*) Is adequate provision made for developing power in silent reading.
   (*c*) What device does it use, not found in other systems?
   (*d*) What equipment does it necessitate—charts, cards? Manual material adequate?
   (*e*) Does it provide norms by which progress is measured?

4. Primers and Readers

   (*a*) Content Aspect: Has content any relation to child's life?
   (*b*) Formal Aspect: Are they graded, progressive, within the comprehension of the children? Is phonics adequately treated?
   (*c*) Pedagogical Aspect: Well illustrated? Designed to arouse interest in reading?
   (*d*) Hygienic Aspect: Do they meet hygienic requirements?

(*e*) Later Readers and Supplementary Readers: Are they literary in aim and content? Progressive and graded? Do they inspire love for reading?

5. Is the method as elaborated consistent with its theory? Does it accomplish its object?
6. How does it compare with others?
   (*a*) In speedy results in mechanics of reading?
   (*b*) In arousing activity of children and their love for reading?
   (*c*) In arousing interest in teachers?
   (*d*) In developing independent reading through mastery of phonetics?
   (*e*) In developing correct habits of silent reading?
7. Criticism
   (*a*) Points in its favor?
   (*b*) Its limitations?
   (*c*) Is the method in harmony with the best theories of the psychology, pedagogy, and hygiene of reading?

Conclusion

The skeptic asks, "Why all these pedagogical inventions; did not the old alphabetic method teach humanity how to read?" The alphabetic method did teach us how to read, but it cheated the child of the joy of the story for many years, and, in the end, often made him a lip reader, or a ponderous word reader. It is for these reasons that we seek a method which makes reading a thought process, and makes the initial lesson a delight to the story-loving child.

Suggested Reading

Briggs and Coffman, *Reading in Public Schools* (Row, Peterson & Co.), Chs. iii, viii, xi, xiii.

Germane and Germane, *Silent Reading* (Row, Peterson & Co.), Chs. xi, xii.

JENKINS, Frances, *Reading in the Primary Grades* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

PARKER, S. C., *Types of Elementary Teaching and Learning* (Ginn & Co.), Ch. v.

STONE, R. C., *Silent and Oral Reading* (Houghton Mifflin Co.), Ch. iii.

WHEAT, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Chs. xii, xiii.

Manuals of the reading systems discussed in the last two chapters will be found very helpful.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SUBJECT MATTER OF PRIMARY READING

The Introductory Books

A system of reading, planned from the point of view of the child, embodying all the tendencies indicated by sound psychology, often fails because of the limitations of its reading matter. Primers have too often been written to meet the needs of the method, to supply words for the phonetic exercises, to sound an ethical platitude, or to state a patriotic sentiment. They are seldom written from a sympathetic study of the life, the interests and the experiences of the children whom they are to inspire. It is interesting to trace the growth of primers from the early New England forms, in which the governing object was to give the child religious and moral instruction or elaborations of the copybook maxims, to the best of our day, which seek to present reading matter that is simple in thought and form, intimate in its relation to child life and child cravings, and valuable from the point of view of literature itself.

Characteristics of a Good Primer

A model primer meets certain primary demands in content and in mechanical organization. Let us turn to each.

1. *Content of the Primer.—The primary requisite of the content of a primer or an early reader is that it should be good literature.* Children should be given reading matter that is worth while, for its own sake. An examination of the flat, insipid, uninspiring subject-matter of the average primer shows at once how many reading systems are hopeless from the very beginning. Although the content must be within the child's sphere of comprehension and interests, it should be decidedly above his level of style, expression, and language possessions.

A second characteristic of proper reading content is that it should be varied. When we scan the wide field of possibilities we readily realize how easily this second requisite can be incorporated. In brief, what can be included in this early reading matter? We may include the following:

(*a*) *The nursery rhymes* that have stood the test of time make delightful content; they are loved by the children, they develop a language cadence and a sense of rhythm; they are adaptable for play and dramatization.

(*b*) *Personal stories of class and school life and experience* should come next as part of the reading matter. Any event in the day's experience about which the children are enthusiastic should become the basis of that day's reading matter. After discussion by the children, the teacher puts the reading lesson on the board, and frames it in terms of words, expressions, and phonetic elements that are known. The most delightful reading lessons are not in books. They treat of child life and are composed by the teacher.

(*c*) *Fairy tales* offer the next contribution to content. If there were no other justification for their introduction

it would suffice to say that many children are fond of them. They color with poetic charm the common human virtues; "they present truth through the guise of images."

But fairy tales should be selected very carefully and rarely presented to children of pre-school age. Too often, the fairy tale is based on gruesome murder or incidents equally horrifying to the sensitive child. In the fairy tale, stepmothers are masters in cruelty, old people are usually repellent, stepsisters are invariably insanely jealous and the youngest daughter is endowed, in generous measure, with beauty and character. The teacher has much to add to the best fairy tale.

(*d*) *Animal and nature stories* receive a hearty response from the children. The child's interest in living nature is second only to his interest in humans. These stories must be literature first and science second. The animal or the plant must be humanized, it must be imbued with the same yearnings, the same loves and hates and temptations that actuate the child itself.

(*e*) *Folk tales and fables* come next in the list of varied elements in the reading content. They contain a liberal stock of the world's wisdom, presented not as moral talks, but through real actors, usually animals. The ethical lessons are usually effective, because the moral situations picture concretely and with a tinge of humor, the just consequence of greed, selfishness, kindness, cruelty, or truthfulness. The moral conclusions are of a worldly sort, exceedingly practical. This accounts for the general disrepute into which the fable has fallen. Many teachers of ethics regard fables of dubious merit and fraught with danger, for they inspire in the child respect for shrewdness and craftiness. But every situation that is cunning

in nature is likely to be misinterpreted by the immature child unless the teacher, by skillful questions or suggestions, undermines the wrong attitude.

(*f*) *Cumulative tales,* with the rhythmic round of repetitions of the type of "A Kid," "The House That Jack Built," have a legitimate place in the primer. The constant repetitions afford a means of ready and natural retention with minimum effort, for the repetitions are not indulged in for the sake of reiteration, but are part of the story itself; their cadence and rhythmic appeal are added factors in producing more permanent impressions. The humorous and the human elements in these stories insure an enthusiastic response by the children.

(*g*) *The humorous story* is another element in early reading content that is conspicuous by its absence. The humor of these stories is a tonic to the nerves, for it has a relaxing property. "The delicious shock of surprise at every 'funny spot' is a kind of electric treatment to the nerves." The list for reading cannot be complete unless we include (*h*) *the dramatic stories* that make the nerves tense and suspend the breath, (*i*) the *Bible stories,* with their delightful narratives free from moralizations (*j*) *myths,* and the host of stories, legends, traditions, that have been a joy and an inspiration to successive generations of youth with voracious literary cravings. And finally (*k*) the *realistic story,* the story of *modern* life. Realism must enter into the child's reading just as it does into books for adults.

A *third* requisite of the content of primers is that *early reading must be well illustrated.* The picture, in a good reading system, is often an integral part of the reading method. It must, therefore, be artistic in drawing, form

and color, even when judged by adult standards. We must discard the cheap cuts that are scattered haphazard throughout the books to relieve the monotony of print and swell the number of pages. The illustrations must be full of action, must arouse constructive fancy and quicken productive imagery.

But the developing mind of the child in the grammar grades makes unnecessary numerous illustrations. Used with injudicious frequency, these graphic appeals are positive dangers. They weaken imagination by giving it undue aid; they prevent the artist in the child's mind from painting his own picture by restricting him to what the eye sees; "they appeal to the senses, where mind and heart should be touched."

The fourth requisite of content is that the theme of the reading matter be adjusted to the experience of the child. A general content will not suit all children; there must be a wise and discriminating organization so that content most natural to city children will not be imposed on country children, and *vice versa.* Too often the content unduly transcends the circumference of the child's experience. The best of the most extensively used primers are found to contain stories and reading matter dealing with the cultivation of soil, the products of garden and orchard, the habits of common animals, concepts that are familiar enough to country children but foreign to their city cousins. An examination into the content of the minds of children brought these remarkable figures: 54 per cent of the children in a school did not know a sheep; 18 per cent, a cow; 52 per cent, a bee; 19 per cent, a hen; 50 per cent, a squirrel; 70 per cent, a snail. Nevertheless, the reading content of their primers assumed a

first-hand knowledge of these nature facts. While the reading matter should widen the child's horizon, it is evident that the pupil must be taken out of his sphere of experience gradually and with due preparation.

2. *Mechanics of the Primer.*—But there is a second side to the organization of the primer. Not only must the content be literary, but it must be designed to develop ability to extract thought when new words or new combinations of phonetic elements occur. The primer must meet these mechanical requisites if it is to develop independent reading.

First, there must be repetition to insure mastery of form. The reading matter must be so framed that the same words occur again and again, and new words are introduced that are built on the same basal phonogram. But at no time must repetition be secured at the price of literary content. Such text as "What ails the lock? Why do you fail to see the tails of the flock?" shows an attempt to reduce the phonetic elements *ail* and *ock* to habit, but the exercise is only a phonetic drill, and cannot attain the dignity of a reading lesson. A cumulative tale in the *McCloskey Primer,* or in the *Progressive Road to Reading,* is an illustration of content designed to give necessary repetitions without sacrificing form to thought.

Secondly, phonetic difficulties must be well graded. Each new lesson and each succeeding story must not only introduce a new set of words having the same family trait, but must also repeat preceding words and utilize old phonograms until their recognition is instantaneous. The forms in reading must be reduced to habit; habit knows only one price, repetition.

Finally, the primer must meet the hygiene requisites that were outlined in a previous discussion. The illustra-

tions must be so placed that they allow for a fair degree of uniformity in the length of lines; the lines must not be long; the type must be of standard size, and the paper must be of a white or yellowish tint, and free from gloss.

Conclusion.—The primary teacher reviewing this long list of requisites may feel discouraged when she seeks them in the books given to her class. The limitations in the content can be counteracted, however, for blackboard and charts can be used frequently to give better subject-matter. But, although nothing can be done if the book is wrong in its mechanical organization, it is, nevertheless, worth knowing the limitations under which we labor, for only then are we ready to demand intelligent reform.

Reading to Pupils

Value of Systematic Reading to Pupils

An excellent method of developing a literary sense in children is to bring them into contact with as much appropriate literature as possible from the very beginning of the school course. The formal reading periods are usually governed by specific difficulties of technical English, and do not allow the teacher to give the classes more than a glimpse of the vast literary treasures in store for them. Only by systematic reading to pupils can we give them that acquaintanceship with literature that develops a sense of appreciation for literary masterpieces. Such an interest in literature gives excellent occupation for leisure hours, teaches a new means of recreation, cultivates imagination, refines emotions, and creates ideals of right living. Reading to children gives them not only this wider knowledge of literature, but presents to them models of correct speech.

It is evident, then, that reading to children must not degenerate into a mere pastime, nor be indulged in spasmodically at the passing whim of the teacher, or as a means of relieving the mental *ennui* of the children. Part of the general reading course must assign systematic, regular and graded material to be read by the teachers to pupils in every class.

Suggestions to Teachers in Reading to Children

1. These values of reading to children cannot be realized unless the teacher sets up a definite aim in each selection and then tries to realize it. Thus, one selection is read because its dialogue affords the teacher an opportunity of offering the class a good model of oral reading, another, because of the ethical principle which is so vividly taught, or another, because it is a good means of introducing children to a type of story, or to the works of a particular writer. The aim gives method and meaning to each period.

2. In reading to children, teachers must make a practice of stopping at logical pauses and questioning the class on the content. If the pupils remember the phraseology of the text, they should be allowed to use it in their answers. In addition to making for greater familiarity with the material presented, this questioning enriches the children's vocabularies.

3. As far as possible, the child should be more than a passive listener throughout the reading. Dramatizations, pictorial representations, and oral discussions, are forms of expression that should be required of children to make them active agents in the lesson.

4. In all questioning the teacher must not allow the

period to degenerate into an informal one designed to elaborate the work of geography, history, or nature study. The distinctive characteristic of this reading must be its literary spirit.

5. In all reading great care should be given to clearness of articulation and enunciation. Sounds incorrectly uttered by the children should be exaggerated in correctness by the teacher so that each child's ear reverberates with the correct auditory impression.

6. In reading to the class the teacher's eyes must not be fixed on the book. There must be enough familiarity with the matter read to enable the teacher to look from the page to the class. The changes in facial expression and the appeal of the eyes enable the story to "come across" and elicit a sympathetic response from the children.

7. At times the teacher may be relieved from continued oral reading by a pupil, but in all such cases only the best readers should be called.

Suggestions for Supervising Reading to Children

If interest is to be maintained, and the pupils are to derive the fund of values that were ascribed to reading to children, supervisors must see that these readings are systematic, graded and varied throughout the course. It is not unusual to see daily schedules of primary classes with no provision for reading to children. These periods must be as definitely indicated as others. Supervisors allow each teacher to read what seems appropriate to her; the inevitable result is lack of gradation and duplications in successive grades. It is the duty of the supervisor to collect as many sources of reading material as possible. Application to the nearest library authorities will usually

bring a host of titles of appropriate readings. Each teacher is then invited to select from these recommendations what she considers best suited to her grade; this becomes the assignment for her class for the school term. At the end of the term each teacher criticizes the assignments, indicating those that were found uninteresting, or too difficult, or too simple, or better suited for another grade. The supervisor must correct the assignments in the light of the experience of the teachers and her personal judgment. The second term finds a more favorable allotment of material in each grade. In this manner the "reading to children" becomes graded, systematic, and varied, and thus contributes liberally to each child's literary stock.

Telling Stories to Children

The Dignity of Story-Telling

The poet who laments that "the days of minstrelsy are gone" expresses for youth its deep sense of loss. Every child is a romanticist, in whose life the minstrel occupies an exalted place, satisfying a deep-seated love for story, which is part of childhood itself. Story-telling has, therefore, a dignity and an importance all its own. It is an art that few teachers possess and many must cultivate. The art of story-telling must be emphasized in the classroom to-day, because there is vital need of giving our children part of their heritage of literary lore long before they are introduced to the symbols of reading. The more the love of story is strengthened, the more eager does the child become to satisfy it. Hence, when the child is old enough to learn to read, he finds urgent motive for mastering symbols and phonetic elements, for these he regards as the path to

new joys—new stories. Secondly, the story is a vital part of many methods of teaching reading to beginners. Unless the story is told well in a method like the McCloskey, or the Progressive Road, or the Aldine, the spirit of intense pleasure and anticipation is lost, and the work becomes the same arduous task as in the formal methods.

Purposes of Story-Telling

But story-telling, like any part of classroom work, has its definite purposes. What ends must we have in view in telling the children a series of selected stories?

1. Our first aim and the object that should be part of every story period is to give the child *the joy* to be found *in our literary possessions.* A story, like any other literary form, is basically a work of art; the justification for the art element in the curriculum is the justification of the story. Pleasure is hence its keynote. The story plays an important part in the game of life, its function being to add the spirit of excitement, beauty, and emotional strain —in a word, to relieve the daily routine. Pleasure, not instruction, is the message of the story. "The story must enlarge and enrich the spiritual possessions of the child."

2. A second aim of the story may be *the informational end.* But this must be incidental and thoroughly subordinated to the former. It must be both secondary and implied. One learns history or sociology or psychology from the drama and the novel, but this aspect in these literary forms is neither vital nor basic.

3. The story may well be used as a means of giving *relief from classroom intensity.* At the end of a regular physical training period with its demand for uniformity, close attention, keen concentration, and readiness for in-

stantaneous response the child may be just as fatigued mentally as before the lesson. The story brings complete relief and it relaxes the strained nerves. This relief serves to intensify concentration when work is resumed.

4. A story is often *the best medium of establishing a bond of sympathy between children and teacher.* It is an effective instrument for creating the necessary "rapport"; it is an "open sesame" to the heart of children. Many a sad substitute teacher has found the story the best means of introducing herself to the class and taking hold of the situation.

5. The story is an excellent medium by means of which the power of *sustained attention can be developed* in the children. Children's interests are short-lived. No one form of mental activity is maintained with any degree of intensity. What better means to introduce sustained attention in the child's mental life than the story?

6. As a means of *developing the expressional powers* of the children, the story has few equals. The teacher of composition in the primary grades finds that the children's natural timidity, backwardness and self-consciousness, form the first serious difficulty. The story enlists their interests, they become absorbed in it, and, for the time being, forget themselves. Spontaneous expression is now made possible. What forms of expression shall we demand? In the main any one of the following three ways will suffice: Mere retelling in the child's own words, even with a touch of originality as to details and sequence, is one way. Pictorial illustration is a second mode of expression. Where drawing in the early classes is taught as a form of composition, a medium for the expression of one's thoughts in graphic rather than verbal form, the

pictures, characters, or situations of the story can be drawn by the children. Dramatization forms the next important means of expression. But, in carrying it out, we must remember that all children must participate in classroom dramatizations. A star performance has no place in the class. Then, too, the timid child must not be forced; he may be invited, coaxed and encouraged. Failure in a forced attempt may mean permanent discouragement.

7. The final purpose of the story may be to *arouse moral judgments.* We must not force a moral if the story does not yield one spontaneously, nor is it necessary that every story should be freighted with a moral.

Selection of Stories to Tell

Before telling the story one naturally submits it, consciously or unconsciously, to the standards: "Is it appropriate? Is it well arranged?" But we must be sure that we answer these questions from the children's viewpoint, rather than from our adult judgment. What do young people seem to prefer in stories? A series of varied stories was read to different groups of children. At the end of the term, a vote was taken, and it was found by Miss Bryant that "The Three Bears," "The Little Pigs," "The Woman and the Pig" were voted the most popular. From their selections and from their eliminations we can readily infer the qualities that children demand in stories.

Three characteristics of the stories chosen by the children are: (1) *The story must abound in action.* "Something happens all the time. Each step is an event." There are no descriptions, no gaps, no moralizing, nothing to impede the movement of the story. (2) *The pictures must be about things well known to the children.* In the

"Three Bears" we have the animals, a spoon, a house, a chair, a bed, etc. The story so orders these that an element of mystery tinges all the incidents and transports the children into Bearland. (3) *The stories must be cumulative, repetitive.* Each story is built up by a spiral of repetition, each circle repeats the previous incident and adds a new touch. This type of story appeals to the child, because it gives increased familiarity with each phase of the story. Just as we experience a feeling of joy in recognizing a quotation, or a *motif* in music, so, too, the child is delighted to recognize and feel each repetition. There is a joy in keeping the sequence accurate. The cumulative tale, by its natural repetitions, enables the child to attain this end.

How to Tell a Story

The successful story-teller follows, unconsciously, perhaps, a few important principles. What shall the inexperienced narrator remember to guide him?

1. *Know the Message of the Story.*—Since a story is a work of art, it has a message. We must make sure that we have found it before we attempt to give it to others. The message varies with the story. It may be one of humor, of pathos, of sincerity, of morality, or of nonsense. We must find the basic appeal of the story and then let it control the whole period.

2. *Feel the Basic Emotion.*—The message of a story cannot be delivered unless it is actually felt by the messenger. Hence, one must never attempt to tell a story one does not feel. The sham of pretense is apparent at once; the appreciation must be genuine. The final test before telling a story is, "Does the narrator enjoy the telling?"

3. *Aim at Correct Technique.*—The technique of the telling has considerable influence in determining the appeal and the effect which the story will make. Hence we must be sure of a number of factors that determine effective, well-polished technique.

(*a*) *Know your story.* In the telling there must be no halting for a name, a place, or a date. The narrator must not allow the story to show contradictions of facts or incidents. The story must be so familiar that at no point does it become necessary to improvise. It must have the smoothness of a personal incident, free from every suggestion of effort and labor.

(*b*) *The story need not be memorized.* To secure the proper grace and ease of narration many professional story-tellers memorize their stories in their early attempts. The opinion seems general that in memorization there is grave danger of becoming stilted and artificial. As the words fall mechanically from the lips, they betray a lack of spontaneity.

(*c*) *Proper physical conditions must be secured.* If possible, children ought to be seated in a semicircle, or in two semicircles, while listening to the story. With the unfortunate furniture which prevails this is impossible, but in almost every class children can be brought closer to the narrator. The children must always see the teacher's face; they must be "physically close to be mentally close."

(*d*) *The voice is the chief agent in technique.* The teacher must never stop the story to admonish William or Mary for a petty offense. Continue with the story, in the hope that it has enough charm and interest to quiet the children. The voice should at all times be sympathetic and

subdued. A loud voice kills all feeling and makes proper atmosphere and appeal impossible. But there is no reason for painful refinement or an artificial whisper.

(*e*) *Be in the mood.* The best means to get oneself into the proper emotional setting is to have the characteristic picture of the story flash repeatedly through one's mind. There must be a sincere effort to take on the dominant mood from the very beginning.

(*f*) *Tell it "simply, directly, dramatically."* This is the essence of Miss Bryant's advice. *Simply* cautions against posing and affectations. *Directly* advises that we go straight through the story, get to its very heart, but with no explanation. *Dramatically* cautions to avoid the mannerisms of the elocutionist. It urges a vivid, responsive, sincere narration, with the gestures, the voice, and the speech pauses of natural life. If the story itself cannot touch the child's heart, no ranting or gesticulating will.

The Moral

Many an excellent story loses its appeal, fails to grip the children and provoke the designed response because of the moralizing indulged in by the teacher. "Don't Moralize" should be emblazoned in shining letters as a warning against the common pitfall. Let the story, through its sentiments, make its own appeal. If the story cannot, the teacher cannot. An explanation or a concrete application that is deemed necessary may be given briefly at some point during the story, but in the end the story must teach its own lesson; the final appeal must be the appeal made by the story itself. No story has ever made a good child of a bad one. But the cumulative effect of story upon story, appeal upon appeal, has a keen and subtle influence

which we cannot estimate. The moralizer robs the story of its lasting effect.

Suggested Reading

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Vostrovsky, Clara, "A Study of Children's Reading Tastes," *Pedagogical Seminary,* 6, pp. 523-535.

Wheat, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Ch. xii.

Anthologies of Prose and Poetry such as *Children's Literature,* by Curry and Clippinger (Rand, McNally & Co.); *The Children's Poets* by Barnes (World Book Co.); *The Singing World* by Untermeyer (Harcourt, Brace & Co.).

CHAPTER IX

PHONETICS AND THE MECHANICS OF READING

The Objects of Phonetic Teaching

However literary a reading method may be in its inception and early development, its final efficiency is appreciably decreased if it does not develop power for independent reading by reducing the recognition and interpretation of symbols to the plane of habit. Phonics, or phonetics, must be coördinate with thought in any reading method, for the following reasons:

1. The child must develop power to attack new words that occur in his reading.
2. Ability to recognize these new word-forms is determined by a knowledge of phonograms and the sounds which they represent. This knowledge of phonics serves an equally important *rôle* in spelling.
3. The correct sound cannot be uttered unless the child hears it correctly. A study of phonetics must sharpen auditory perception and develop greater sensitiveness for correct sound through systematic ear training.
4. Correct sound cannot be uttered unless the child has perfect control of the necessary organs of speech. Through phonetic drills the child learns to use the organs of speech in perfect coördination.
5. A systematic and graded study of phonetics develops clear articulation, correct enunciation, and proper voice control; without these, the quality of spoken

English degenerates to the careless and vulgar level of the street.

The Necessary Facts of Phonetics

The efficiency of the teacher's work in phonetics will be determined by her knowledge of the basic facts of sound production, as well as by her pedagogical expertness. We must summarize, therefore, the necessary basis of facts.

Terms Defined

The terms *phonic* and *phonetic* are used loosely in the literature of reading. Most writers make no distinction between them beyond the diacritical marks that characterize phonetics. Some authors use phonics to refer to the study of sound, and phonetics, in a larger sense, to include sound and its representation by symbols. Since these distinctions are more honored in the breach than in the observance, we may define both phonics and phonetics as the science of speech sound, while a phonogram is merely the written representation of a sound. The symbols *b, d, k, ight, ing, f,* are therefore phonograms.

What Is Speech?

We must distinguish two important phases of speech, *the organic* and *the acoustic.* The former refers to the organs of speech production, which can be grouped under three heads: (1) organs of articulation: teeth, tongue, lips, and palate; (2) organs of breath and voice: vocal chords, laryngeal muscles, glottis; (3) organs of coöperation: chest, abdominal muscles, lungs, diaphragm, etc. The great number of coöperating organs necessary for

speech explains why accurate articulation and enunciation are impossible very often with young children, who have not yet developed reliable coördination; why speech is physically fatiguing; why speech, which, under ordinary circumstances may be correct, often becomes careless during fatigue; why conditions which are enervating always aggravate speech difficulties of stammerers; and why habits of correct speech are developed with such difficulty in foreign-born children. The acoustic phase of speech concerns itself only with the quality of sound, control of breath, and resonance.

In the light of its organic and acoustic aspects, speech is only breath expelled by the lungs and modified either in the throat or in the mouth. If the reader will merely exhale a breath through the mouth he will find that no speech sound results. Let him now expel a breath again, and modify it in the throat, and he will recognize some vowel sound; the utterance of *ah,* or *eh,* will illustrate this process. If he will now expel breath and not interfere with it until it gets into the mouth chamber and then subject it to explosion or friction at the point of emission, a consonant sound will be produced. In giving the sound of *s, t, p,* he will go through the process which has just been described.

Classification of Sound According to the Manner of Production

An analysis of the mode of speech production, i.e., breath expelled by the lungs and modified by the throat or the mouth, gives three classes of sounds, as can be seen in the following table:

How Produced	Illustration	Technical Names
1. Those in which there is mere breath explosion or friction.....	*wh–p–t–k–f–th* as in *thin*	Pure Consonants, Atonics, Surds. Breath Consonants.
2. Those in which there is a vocal murmur modified by the size and the shape of the mouth.....	*a in ate, at, far, fall*	Vowels, Vocals, Tonics.
3. Those produced by combining breath explosion or friction with a vocal murmur.	*w–b–d–g–v–th* as in *them*	Semi-Consonants, Sonants, Subtonics, Voiced Consonants.

The reader can best understand this grouping by actually uttering these sounds and studying the processes involved.

The Consonant Further Considered

From the table it is evident that consonants are the result of "audible friction, or stopping of the breath, in some part of the mouth or throat." All consonants can therefore be whispered, while no vowel can. An attempt to whisper the sounds of *wh* and *w, p* and *b, t* and *d, k* and *g, th* as in *thin, th* as in *them,* will reveal the fact that the pure consonants which are produced by mere breath explosion or friction can be whispered more softly and with greater ease than those which have an element of vocal murmur in them. Here we have the reason for the usual classification of consonant sounds into *voiced* and *unvoiced,* such as is given below. Consonants are usually more important than vowels in oral speech, for their care-

less utterance does more to produce lack of clearness than wrong vowel values. Let the reader speak a sentence twice, first giving the vowels wrong values and then slurring the consonants; he will notice that, while the first reading gives mispronunciations the second produces an unintelligible result. The following table of consonant elements in the English tongue is much used to-day; it groups the sounds not in alphabetical order, but according to the mode and place of utterance.

TABLE OF CONSONANT ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH

Mode and Place of Utterance	Momentary		Continuous		Nasal Continuous
	Surd or Breath	Sonant or Voiced	Surd or Breath	Sonant or Voiced	Sonant or Voiced
Lips	*p*	*b*		*w*	*m*
Lips and Teeth			*f*	*v*	
Tongue and Teeth			*th* ink	*th* em	
Tongue and Hard Palate (forward)	*t*	*d*	*s*	*z:r*	*n*
Tongue and Hard Palate (back)	*ch*	*j*	*sh*	*zh:r*	
Tongue, Hard Palate and Soft Palate				*y:l*	
Tongue and Soft Palate	*k*	*g*			*ng*
Indeterminate (various places)	*h*				

Vowels Further Considered

A vowel, we saw, is nothing more than voice (breath murmuring in the throat), modified by the shape of the mouth. Let the reader utter the vowel sounds in the words b*ee*, g*ay*, a*s*k, c*u*t, *aw*ful, p*oo*l, and notice that the same voice is used in all, but the configuration of the mouth is changed by the movements of the tongue, lower jaw, lips, and soft palate. The mouth is a resonance chamber, which

changes the quality of a vowel with its change in shape. Vowels are the musical elements in speech, for they can all be sung.

Since the changing value of vowel sounds is produced by changing the configuration of the mouth, it becomes necessary to arrange the vowels in a graded scale so that, in going from each successive one, the shape of the mouth chamber changes gradually. The old classification studied the sounds of *a* as *ā* (*āte*), *ă* (*ăt*), *ä* (*fär*), *â* (*fâll*); then of *e* as *ē* (*mēre*), *e* (*nĕst*), *ë* (*hër*); then of *i, o,* and *u*. There is obviously no gradation of vowel values in this series. Bell arranged the vowel values in the following sequence, according to their values. If the reader will sound the successive vowels a few times to become familiar with them, and then repeat the exercise and note the changing positions of tongue and lips, he will see at once the basic principle in this sequence:

Lip Changes	*Bell's Vowel Chart*				*Tongue Changes*
The lips are tense and parallel at *ee* (*bee*) and *i* (*pin*)	1	ee	(long)	*bee*	
	2	*i*	(short)	*pin*	
	3	a	(long)	*gay*	The tongue gradually moves down and back in going from *ee* (*bee*) to *e* (*her*)
	4	e	(short)	*met*	
			(long)	*e'er*	
	5	a	(short)	*hat*	
The lips are relaxed and rounded at *a* (*ask*)	6	a	(long)	*ask*	
	7	a	(long)	*father*	
	8	e	(long)	*her*	
	9	u	(short)	*cut*	The back of the tongue gradually moves up and back in going from *u* (*cut*) to *oo* (*pool*)
			(long)	*curtain*	
	10	o	(short)	*not*	
	11	aw	(long)	*awful*	
The lips are puckered at *oo* (*good*)	12	o	(long)	*old*	
	13	oo	(short)	*good*	
		oo	(long)	*pool*	

Value of Scientific Gradation of Vowel Values

The practical teacher may admit that Bell's vowel table is more logical and even more scientific than the old classi-

fication of the sounds according to *a, e, i, o,* and *u,* but still may ask, "What is its practical pedagogical value?" Let us assume that a child of foreign birth cannot utter the correct vowel value in the words *cut, up, sup;* each of these he reads as *cot, op,* and *sop,* respectively. Imitation proves useless, for the child has few English sounds in terms of which to apperceive the vowel sound in question. Instruction as to proper relative positions of the organs of speech is equally useless, because the differences in the organic processes of *u* in *cu*t and *o* in n*o*t are too slight to admit of demonstration to such a child. Let the teacher have recourse to the Bell table and require children to sound the vowels in succession, from number one through eight. If the child can sound these correctly, the vowel in question, *u* in *u*p, will be uttered without difficulty, because the gradual and successive changes in the configurations of the mouth for the first eight sounds will practically force the proper mouth configuration for the ninth vowel value. The phonetic lessons in any system of reading should teach the vowels in this scientific gradation, rather than in the haphazard sequence which is determined by successive sight words.

Diacritical Marks

A source of endless strife in phonetic work is the use of auxiliary symbols to fix variable sounds. Most of the recent methods either entirely eliminate diacritical marks, or else use them only in exceptional cases. Experience shows that diacritical marks in early reading are usually of little service to children and sometimes are the cause of much confusion. But this does not mean that they are never to be taught. While they are unnecessary in early

phonetic and word recognition, they are invaluable for later use when the dictionary becomes an important factor in the child's linguistic studies. Some standard set of diacritical marks should be divided among three or four grades, and taught gradually in lessons designed to develop ability to use the dictionary.

The Gradation of Phonograms

It is obvious that no attempt can be made to grade phonograms unless there are definite principles in accordance with which we are to distinguish a difficult from a simple phonogram. The distinction between simple and compound phonograms affords no basis of gradation. A simple phonogram is a one-letter phonogram, like *f, l, m, p, k, w,* while a compound phonogram is one that contains a number of letters, like *ing, ight, ar, er,* or *at.* Length, however, is no index of the difficulty of a phonogram.

Ward, in his *Rational Method of Reading,* gives the following three principles that determine which phonograms shall be taught early:

1. Those that are uttered with ease by the children: *m, p, f, s* are examples of these, while *th, wh, r* cannot be included under this head.

2. Those that can be prolonged into words without losing their identity. The phonogram *ight* is compound, but, when it is sounded in words like *light, bright, night,* its sound, *it,* is as clear as when it is sounded by itself. But, let the reader sound the phonograms *ar, er, or,* first, as three separate sounds, and then speak the words *beggar, editor,* and *singer.* The untrained ear hardly differentiates the sound of begg*er* from be*ggar,* or edit*er* from

edit*or*. Hence, *er, ar, ir, ur, or,* are classed as difficult phonograms.

3. Those that are common to many words of frequent use. The phonogram *th* (voiced) is difficult, but must be taught early because the frequency of its occurrence tends to make its correct enunciation more simple.

If a reading method begins, not with a few unrelated sentences, but with an entire story, the stock of sight words is sufficiently large to enable the teacher to choose only such words for phonetic analysis as will teach the easier phonograms first.

The Mastery of Sight Words

All analytic methods measure progress by mastery of sight words recognized instantaneously either in lists or in short reading phrases. We must therefore turn our attention to two aspects of sight words: (*a*) how to introduce sight words and phrases and (*b*) how to secure instantaneous recognition.

Introduction of Sight Words

There are many ways of introducing new words that are to be read as sight words with absolutely no phonetic aid. The list submitted below is not complete. A little thought will readily suggest other devices.

1. *Direct Telling.*—It is often advisable to tell children that the word ONE or one or *one* is one. Repeat the information a few times and the word is known.

2. *Association with a Picture or Object.*—Under the picture of a dog is the word DOG or dog or *dog*. The child infers the identity of the word. Such words as *boy, girl,*

Jane, Ted, Will are easily learned by having a child stand in front of the class with the suitable legend.

3. *Dramatization.*—As a particular action is performed the word is put on the blackboard. Each time the action is repeated the word is written or printed on the board. Not many repetitions are required for mastery.

4. *Elliptical Narration.*—The teacher tells a story which repeats the sight words, *higher and higher.* Every time the expression occurs in the narrative, it is put on the board. The story can be lengthened or shortened depending on how many repetitions of a given word or phrase may be necessary.

5. *Comparison.*—Short sentences having one word or an expression in common are written on the board and read to the class. To illustrate:

Good morning, boys.	Over the hills, they flew.
Good morning, girls.	Over the hills, they climbed.
Good morning, children.	Over the hills, they looked.

A few questions will soon lead pupils to identify the common elements, *good morning* and *over the hills.*

6. *By Place in a Memorized Sentence.*—If the pupil knows the story of the hen that found a bag of flour, the teacher puts the first sentence on the board.

One day a hen found a bag of flour.

The children are asked to name the words as the teacher points, to the first, the third, the fifth, the fourth. They are then required to point to *day, found, bag.* Both forms of recognition are achieved by the ordinal position of the words.

Drills to Secure Instantaneous Recognition

A few devices to attain habituation are here offered to serve as models for others, equally effective, that can be evolved by teachers.

1. *Perception or Flash Cards.*—Economy of drill is attained by the use of flash or perception cards usually supplied by the publishers of reading systems. Good drill cards can be made by any teacher.

2. *Mechanical Devices.*—Time can also be saved by the use of mechanical devices of the following types: (*a*) A circular disk is revolved behind a large rectangular cardboard which reveals, through an opening, one word at a time; each circular disk contains a dozen different words on each side. (*b*) Words are written on the blackboard. As the teacher calls a word or expression a pupil is sent to the board to erase it. (*c*) Words and expressions are numbered on the board. When the teacher calls the number, the child gives the word. The drill may be reserved. (*d*) A scrap bag of the words is made. Each child picks a card out of the bag and identifies the word or expression.

3. *Games.*—Almost any of the number games of primary arithmetic can be adopted for drills on sight words. The race is simple and popular. Five columns containing the same five sight words are on the board; five children stand ready. The teacher calls out two of the words. The child who checks them first wins. Care should be exercised not to focalize attention on the game instead of the words.

4. *Dramatization.*—The teacher points to various sight words and the pupils give evidence other than speech that they know the word. To identify the word *walk* or the

phrase, *on the desk,* the appropriate action is performed; the word *boy,* the nearest lad is touched; the word *sad,* the illustrating facial expression is assumed.

5. *The Interrupted Narrative.*—The teacher tells a story containing the sight words to be mastered. As each sight word is reached in the narrative, she halts and writes it on the board and requires it to be identified by a designated pupil.

6. *Comparison.*—Assume that the children can recognize a word only by finding its numerical position in a memorized sentence. The child knows *boy* because it is the third word in

> The lucky boy now sold his pig for a cow.

The teacher writes *boy* on the board and the children compare this isolated word with the standard sentence and decides it is the same as the third word. When facility is gained by this process of comparison, the memorized sentence is erased and the words are put on perception cards.

7. *Reading New Content.*—As a final test of successful mastery, children should be required to read new sentences and new stories made with the known words. The sentence above becomes,

> Now the lucky boy sold his pig for a cow.
> For a cow, the lucky boy now sold his pig.

Whatever form of drill is used, this final test should never be omitted.

How to Teach a Phonogram

Let us assume that the phonogram *ight* is to be taught. How shall the lesson be developed, in order to secure the best results in the limited time? The progress of the successive steps is indicated in the following outline:

The Teacher's Preparation

The teacher must ask:

1. Is the phonogram in the correct place in the graded series of phonic lessons?
2. Does the phonetic element *ight* grow out of sight words previously learned?
3. Will the phonetic element be useful in later word-building? Will it give the child ability to read a long list of words independently?
4. Have all the mechanical details been mastered?
   (*a*) Is there doubt about the pronunciation?
   (*b*) Is there doubt about the position of the organs of speech, in order to produce the sound of *ight?*
   (*c*) Is the complete list of words containing the phonogram *ight* ready?

Preparing the Class

Before the lesson is begun, two important exercises must be given to prepare the class. These are (1) ear training and (2) vocal gymnastics.

1. *Ear Training, General.* — Experience shows that progress is accelerated by postponing formal work in phonetics at least four weeks and giving these periods to ear training exercises of the following type:

(*a*) *Onomatopoetic drills.* The children make sounds imitating the buzzing of the bee, the mooing of the

cow, the quacking of the duck, the whirring of the wheel, the choo-chooing of the engine, the sh-shing of the warning mother asking for silence, etc.

(*b*) *Rhyming exercises.* Children are encouraged to give many words that rhyme with *fear;* that begin with the same sound as *ship.*

(*c*) *Singing exercises.* Let children sing the scale to successive words in a simple sentence; now use the same word for every note in the scale; now select a syllable, a useful vowel phonogram, any useful phonogram.

(*d*) *Word analysis.* Such words as are made up of two known words are now broken up into their components, thus, *shoemaker, shoe maker.* Later, words are separated into parts and syllables regardless of the meaning of the constituent parts, thus, *happy, hap py; pencil, pen cil.*

These general exercises are not without specific values. They make for auditory acuity, give identity to sounds, and acquaint the child with the processes followed in later formal phonetic analysis.

Specific preparatory ear training. After four weeks of the type of general exercises outlined above phonetics may be introduced. In each new lesson, specific auditory appeals must be made. The children should hear the teacher utter with exaggerated clearness a number of words containing the phonogram to be taught. Sentences or a short story embodying these *ight* words are then read to the children. The teacher thus makes an effective auditory appeal.

The children are now called upon *individually* to sound the *ight* words, teacher and pupils criticising. Rhyming words are called for and, as before, no concert answers are permitted. It is well to call on the children of good speech

first so that the others may have the benefit of additional auditory models to imitate.

The aim throughout is to sharpen auditory perception and to give so rich an auditory apperceptive stock that children become sensitive to sounds that represent either whole words or mere syllables. The ear training drill that introduces a lesson rarely takes more than two or three minutes.

2. *Vocal Gymnastics.*—Children's speech is often defective because of muscular rigidity and inability to make lips, teeth, tongue, and breath work together. Better results will therefore be obtained, if we develop in pupils mobility of speech muscles and coördination of the speech organs.

Exercises like the following will reduce the need of urging pupil, "open your mouth, relax your jaw":

(*a*) *Breathing and relaxing exercises.* Inhale. With the exhalation, relax completely. Let the whole frame hang loose. Relax the lower jaw.

(*b*) *Lip exercises.* Lips out, puckered, rounded, stretch tight as if to say *ee.*

(*c*) *Tongue exercises.* Point tongue out, up, down, right, left. Draw tongue as far back as possible. Count your teeth, pointing to each tooth with your tongue.

(*d*) *Unvoiced speech.* Do what you see the actor do on the screen when he says "Go," or "Come to me." Assume that you are talking to a deaf person who reads your lips. Answer, without voice, a number of questions asked you.

These exercises are typical of a great many that can be formulated by the teacher to break down muscle rigidity and develop adequate mobility and coördination.

The Lesson Itself

1. *Phonetic Analysis.*—The class is now ready for the isolation of the phonogram. This the teacher can accomplish in one of two ways: (*a*) by exaggerated slowness of utterance, *fff īt, mmm īt,* or (*b*) by a comparison of the family of *ight* words. In the second procedure the teacher asks the children to listen for a similar sound in the following series, *right, fight, tight,* etc. When the sound of *ight* is isolated, children are called *individually* to utter it with great distinctness. This step ends when the children learn the visual symbols "ight" and *ight* for the sound.

2. *The Synthetic Step or the Blend.*—This is the last step in the lesson, for the child now learns to read any word whose basal phonogram is *ight.* It is here that the fruits of phonetic analysis and ear training are reaped, and the child develops independence in reading.

To facilitate the drill of blending known phonetic elements with *ight* to produce a new word, mechanical devices are suggested. Typical of these easily made aids we may mention the following: An ordinary board, about 30 inches long and 3 inches wide, has a hole (*y*) at one end by means of which it is suspended from the frame of the blackboard, and a nail (*x*) at the other, which acts as a pivot on which circular cardboards are revolved. A circular disk, having a diameter of about 15 inches, is cut from ordinary cardboard. The center is perforated and is revolved on the pivot nail. On the circular disk the teacher writes *s, l, f, n, r, t,* and on the board *ight.* By revolving the cardboard disk, the words *sight, light, fight,* etc., can be produced instantaneously. Other drills, with stairs, ladders, railroad ties, games, etc., will be found in manuals of primary reading. These mechanical devices

enable the drill to become spirited and help toward permanent fixation and the inculcation of the habit of instantaneous recognition.

General Directions for All Phonetic Lessons

Cumulative experience has shown the wisdom of certain devices in the teaching of phonetics, and the limitations of others. We must, therefore, sum up for the class teacher, the constructive suggestions for all phonetic lessons.

1. *The Analytic Synthetic Procedure.*—The words selected for phonetic analysis must also be such as are known at sight. The sequence of the complete lesson is therefore from sight words to phonogram, and then back again to a rich stock of words formed by phonetic synthesis.

2. *Motivation.*—As early in the work as possible children should be led to understand that phonetic mastery means better speech and independent reading. The new attitude which the children will take toward ensuing lessons dispels the seeming drudgery, and guarantees active coöperation and interest in personal progress.

3. *In the Blend, Place the Burden on the Child.*—The test of the effectiveness of the lesson lies in the ability of the child to read new words. It is therefore unwise to give undue aid during the synthetic step. If unusual difficulty is here experienced, the cause lies in lack of preparation or lack of mastery of phonetic elements previously taught.

4. *The Content Aspect in Phonetics.*—Although phonetics deals with a formal phase of language, thought need not be excluded. All results of phonetic blends should be

real words. Frequently children should be required to give evidence of ability to recognize new words by acting them out, drawing them, or pointing out the objects they represent. Thus, the phonogram taught was *ing;* when the teacher put the word *sing* on the board during the blend, the child regarded it as a request, and sang, *do, re, me;* at the word *ring,* another child drew a circle on the board These exercises tend to reëstablish the basic association in reading, symbol-thought association, and add an interest which comes from dealing with ideas, rather than with mere form.

5. *Instantaneous Recognition.*—It should be the aim of the synthetic step to develop almost instantaneous recognition of new words. A well-graded course that unfolds the phonetic elements slowly, and provides sufficient drill, can develop the habit of rapid word recognition without slow, laborious lip-movement.

6. *Grouping According to Specific Inabilities.*—In all phonetic work, concert answering should be regarded unfavorably. Each child, whether correct or not in his utterances, becomes an unconscious model for his neighbor and the successive imitations sink gradually, but surely, to lower levels. The rapid individual recitation is imperative in phonetic lessons.

The mode of instruction, as well as the conduct of the recitation, must be thoroughly individualized. All children have their difficulties in phonetics, but not all labor under the same limitations. Some can recognize all phonograms, but are defective in enunciation; other children utter some sounds accurately, but are unable to reproduce others, etc. It is evident that any system of class teaching in phonetics will give children only passing attention in

their weak points, and expend much more time in drilling on what they know. As soon as practical, the class should be grouped according to weaknesses along important lines, and the instruction should seek to help each child according to his needs.

7. *Undue Emphasis on Organic Phase of Speech.*—Only as a last resort should children be taught the relative position of the organs of speech for the production of a given sound. We must condemn the advice in a teachers' manual which prescribes the following procedure in teaching the correct sound of a new phonogram: (*a*) utter the sound; (*b*) explain position of organs of speech; (*c*) let each child with mirror in hand study the relative position of his own teeth, tongue, etc.; (*d*) let the children attempt utterance. Why assume that all children are incapable of producing the sound merely because the phonogram, the symbol, is new?

All speech eventually sinks to the level of habit. The aim must therefore be to make correct speech an unconscious process. Let the teacher utter the sound with exceptional clearness and accuracy, and call upon the children individually to imitate. A few attempts and repetitions will show that a majority of the class learns new sounds by imitation, and through repetition develops the habit of correct speech. To emphasize the organic aspect of speech to these children makes speech a conscious process for them. Many pupils who succeed in producing the sound correctly by mere imitation fail signally when they must consciously control the complex coördinations of speech. Only those children who cannot reproduce a sound correctly after they have made repeated attempts to imitate the clearly enunciated speech of the

teacher, should be introduced to the organic phase of speech.

8. *In Early Drills, Associate the Vowel with the Preceding Consonant.*—The common practice in word analysis is to relate the vowel with the consonant that follows as is shown in the forms below.

not = *n* + *ot*, therefore,			west = *w* + *est*, therefore,		
c	+*ot* =	cot	*b*	+*est* =	best
d		dot	*l*		lest
g		got	*n*		nest
h		hot	*p*		pest
l		lot	*qu*		quest
r		rot	*r*		rest
			t		test

In the blend, difficulty arises because children tend to add a short ŭ to single consonant sounds. They sound *b* as *bŭ, d* as *dŭ, p* as *pŭ.* To the incorrect *pŭ* they now add *est* and produce a peculiar hybrid, *pŭ ĕst.* Thus a new problem arises for the teacher to solve.

To avoid this difficulty, authorities urge that the words above be analyzed in this form:

no+*t*; *go*+*t*; *do*+*t*. | *we*+*st*; *be*+*est*.

Now, surely the child will not say *wŭ ĕst, bŭ ĕst, gŭ ot.* But a new difficulty confronts the child. He sees *we* + *st* and thinks of *we* as *wēē* not *wĕ.* *Be* + *st* recalls *bēē* for the first syllables, not *bĕ.* Similarly *no* + *t, go* + *t* and *do* + *t* will recall the familiar nō, gō, do (doo) instead of the required sound of o in *not, got* and *dot.* Another type of difficulty is therefore substituted.

To combat the tendency to add short u, *ŭ,* to single con-

sonant sounds, teach such phonograms as *ba* very early in the study of vowels. Form words by adding to *ba*. The child now says *bat, bad, ban, bag, back* and not the undesirable *bŭ ăd*. Once a child's ear learns to reject the short u after a consonant sound, the besetting sin of corrupting the consonant is eliminated.

The Elimination of Habitual Mispronunciations

The occasional mispronunciations that one hears from children, *municípal, execútive,* and the like, need cause little worry. These drop out in time in the course of experience. These errors are usually personal and temporary, and differ with each individual. The types of mispronunciation that must be the grave concern of the school are those that are heard in ever-increasing circles, and tend to drag our spoken language to the level of the street. Errors like *d*at, go*i*l, *hist-ry, singin', w'ite, t'row,* T*oos*day, are no longer individual weaknesses, but are found in large groups in every class; their eradication is an imperative duty. It is evident that these linguistic mutilations can be traced to definite contributing causes—and that remedial measures which do not take cognizance of these causes and seek to counteract them, are inevitably doomed to failure. Our procedure will be to ascertain the causes and then evolve a remedial program.

Causes of Habitual Mispronunciations

Chief among the conditions that make for slovenly speech we must enumerate the following:

1. Foreign linguistic characteristics are carried over into English. The Jewish child hears and speaks in his home the language of peculiar gutturals. He brings these

over to his English, and turns *song* into *sonk,* and *Long Island* into *Lonk Giland;* the German child brings the flat, dull *d* and the broad vowels of his language to the word *that,* and turns it into *daat;* the Italian child intonates his English with the cadence peculiar to the language of his parents.

2. The influence of the street helps to keep spoken English on a low level. Few children have the courage to carry the correctly enunciated *th* or *wh* of *th*ose and *wh*ich, or the correct *u* in d*u*ty, to their playmates. In the few hours allotted to it, the school must engage in conflict with innumerable retarding forces that make up the greater part of the child's social environment. Not only must the school develop habits of correct speech, but it must spend much of its energies undermining existing habits of incorrect speech.

3. Indifference or sheer carelessness contributes materially toward slovenliness of speech. Not until children understand the significance of well-spoken language will they experience a motive sufficiently vital to stir in them an honest endeavor at self-improvement.

4. Lack of proper apperceptive auditory basis is another contributing cause of incorrect oral speech. Many children of foreign parentage hear so little English that the auditory center fails to interpret accurately the sounds that are made by the teacher. The ear has become so accustomed to the competing language that it can no longer hear accurately the pure English sound. Many such children make no distinction between *t'row* and *throw, w'ite* and *white,* in their speech, because they hear none in the most accurately enunciated speech of others. Tireless patience, repeated appeals, exaggerated enunciation and a more inti-

mate relation to the English language in the hours after school, gradually develop an auditory sensitivity which enables the child to hear these differences.

5. Wrong position of the organs of speech makes correct utterance impossible. Where imitation fails, the teacher must show the child the necessary positions of the speech organs.

6. Physical or physiological impediments, like the absence of teeth, poor articulation of teeth, thickness of tongue, short ligaments, malformation of the jaw, are handicaps to correct speech that teachers must note, for some of these can be corrected by surgical or dental treatment.

The Correction of Habitual Errors

1. *Passing Attention to Mispronunciations Will Not Develop Habits of Correct Speech.*—In every grade the teacher is held responsible for the correction of all errors in children's oral speech. When the mispronunciation is heard, the child is corrected and the matter is dismissed until the child offends again. It is obvious that such spasmodic and haphazard correction lacks the vigor and the concentrated drill that tend to eradicate these typical errors of speech. To eliminate these, each teacher must be held responsible for a few definite corrections. The principal or supervisor should list all habitual mispronunciations that occur in children's speech. These should then be apportioned among the grades of the first five or six years. Such a list will not contain more than eighteen or twenty common mispronunciations; allotting these to the six grades, from the beginning of the third year through the end of the fifth, we have an average of three to a grade.

Any third-year teacher feels that by unrelenting drill and by emphasis in every lesson, she can break the habit in her children of (1) dropping final *g*, *"seein',"* (2) slurring or omitting *r*, *"boid,"* and (3) turning *th* (*them*) into *d*, *"dem."* In this grade other mistakes are corrected when they occur, but only three are singled out for vigorous drill. In this way, all common errors can be eliminated by the end of the fifth school year. This seems a reasonable result. But to require every teacher in every grade to correct every error of oral speech is to court failure.

2. *Effective Motivation Is Very Essential.*—Children usually attach little significance to correctness of speech sound. They regard the speech demands of the teacher as arbitrary exactions. It is obvious that children and even intelligent adults must be made to understand the social value of correctness of speech and to feel a pride in the quality of their enunciation and articulation. Unmotivated phonetic drills are mere mouthings that neither weaken old speech habits nor lead to new ones.

3. *Make a Strong Auditory Appeal.*—Having determined to eradicate *d*em for *th*em, the teacher now sounds a list of words that begin with the voiced *th*. This list is repeated two or three times with exaggerated enunciation of the *th* until every ear reverberates with the sound of the voiced *th*. If the child hears foreign sounds in his home, or incorrect *th* on the street, his ear must be forcibly assailed by the correct *th*.

4. *Invite Earnest Imitation.*—Children should now be asked to read the *th* words and the sentences embodying them. It will be noticed that some children will pronounce the list of words correctly enough but will not do as well with these very words in sentences. The reason is

clear. When words are read, attention is directed to careful phonation but when sentences are read, most of attention is concerned with recognizing all the symbols and securing and expressing the thought. Ability to pronounce words correctly when most of the attention is focused on another problem gives evidence of possession of correct speech habit.

5. *Group the Children.*—Those who meet the required standard of speech receive no further attention in the matter of voiced *th.* Those who fail are given a second vigorous auditory appeal and are again asked to read the words and sentences. Two or three appeals will bring results. In the usual class, not more than eight or ten children will be left in the group who still have trouble with voiced *th* words.

6. *Explain Organic Processes to Those Who Fail.*—Only those children who fail in their repeated endeavors to imitate the teacher's speech should be shown how the organs of speech are used in order to produce the sound in question. Each pupil should have a small mirror, and should study the position necessary for correct utterance of the sound. The children should look at the teacher carefully as she whispers these sounds to them; they should be told to speak these sounds without voice as the teacher watches them and criticizes position. If the organic phase is correct, children should be called upon *individually* to produce the sound simultaneously with the teacher. As each child succeeds he is put into the group that reads sentences designed to make the correct utterance of the sound an unconscious process.

Infinite patience is required. After all this careful work, foreign children, when called upon to pronounce

them, often put the tongue between the teeth, vibrate the tongue a moment and say *thththdem.* These children evidently hear the correct sound, have learned its organic phase, but have not yet developed the coördinations necessary to produce it. Untiring drill will bring results.

7. *Employ Certain Mechanical Aids.*—(*a*) "Tongue Twisters" is the inelegant name for those artificial rhymes and nonsense jingles designed to give practice in certain sounds. The famous query, "If Theosophus Thistle, the successful thistle sifter, sifted three thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb, then where are the three thousand thistles that Theosophus Thistle, the successful thistle sifter, sifted through the thick of his thumb?" is an illustration of the host of drills found in any technical volume on phonetics. A list of these books is given at the end of the chapter.

(*b*) The lisper, who turns all sounds of *s* into *th,* and says, "Thæsar thaid that he thaw" for "Cæsar said that he saw," can be helped if he will assiduously practice reading such sentences in front of a mirror and keep pushing the tongue, as it comes forward, back into the mouth. In saying "saw," the lisper puts the tongue out too far, and produces a soft *th;* as soon as the tongue is pushed back of the teeth the soft *th* becomes an *s,* and *thaw* becomes *saw.*

(*c*) The Russian whose attachment for the sound of *w* leads him to read *wery wiwacious* for *very vivacious,* can produce the sound of *v* by biting the lower lip with the upper teeth; *a "very vivacious and villainous villain"* will now be read correctly. The person who commits the opposite fault, viz., who reads, *Vell Villiam, what vould you have?* can produce the sound of *w* by puckering his lips, saying *oo, oo, oo,* and approaching his finger gently to his

mouth: *oo* now becomes *woo,* and *vell* becomes a crude *well;* a correct beginning is made, self-confidence is developed, and the foreigner approximates English pronunciation.

(*d*) The child who cannot produce soft *th,* and says *free birds* for *three birds,* can learn to produce this sound by biting the tongue between the teeth and forcing the breath out at the point of contact. These simple mechanical aids when applied will suggest a host of auxiliary devices for other difficulties if teachers will carefully analyze their own organic processes in speech.

8. *Carry Speech Standards Over to All Other Lessons.*—To set up a standard in reading and English lessons and tolerate careless enunciation and articulation at other times militates effectively against the development of correct speech habits. Under the plan of allocating a limited number of corrections to each grade, children become so sensitive to these errors that there is constant self correction and correction of classmates. Before long, controlling speech habits are acquired. In this way it is possible to eradicate almost all typical speech errors by the end of the sixth school year.

Articulation

The Term "Articulation" Defined

Articulation refers to the union of successive sounds that make speech. Those who produce isolated sounds correctly have good enunciation. When these sounds are uttered in rapid succession to produce separate words or words in a sentence, some of them may be lost or added. Such speech is said to be faulty in articulation. Thus, *histr'y* for *history* is an error of articulation.

Kinds of Errors of Articulation

There are three common classes of faulty articulation:

1. *Faults of Omission.*—*G'ography, pome* for *poem, singin', 'rithmetic, hyg'enic, gover'ment, Feb'uary, lib'ary.* The omitted sounds can probably be uttered correctly by most of the people who are guilty of the errors listed above.

2. *Faults of Addition.*—Ath*a*letic, gym*i*nasium, cost*ed,* hurt*ed,* umberella. It seems as if the speaker cannot produce the sound of *ath, let, ic* in rapid succession without the introduction of *ă* between *ath* and *let.*

3. *Faults of Eliding Terminal Sounds of Words in Sentences.*—It is not uncommon to find pupils who can utter the individual words, *and, went, he, I, away,* with absolute correctness but who will invariably say, *she an' I* and *he wen' away.* This type of error is not universally condemned for there are teachers of speech who insist that these elisions are both natural and necessary for smooth, unaffected speech.

Causes of Faulty Articulation; Remedial Measures

The most common causes of faulty articulation are set forth in the following tabular arrangement with measures designed to overcome them:

Cause	*Remedial Measure*
1. Excessive speed in speech. This is the most prevalent cause of faulty articulation. Sounds are "swallowed" in the rush of speech. In some cases, excessive speed is habit, in others, it is an	1. Introduce any device that will develop habit of slower speech, thus: (*a*) A pupil reads a few lines with the teacher. Gradually, the teacher's voice becomes less audible; finally,

Cause	*Remedial Measure*
accompaniment of a general nervousness.	it drops out of the reading and the child continues at the rate set by his teacher. (*b*) Pupils read at the rate set by a metronome. (*c*) Pupils read accompanied by tappings by the teacher. (*d*) Insist on slower rate of speech in all lessons. Where general nervousness exists the remedy is usually beyond the province of the teacher.
2. Carelessness. The child is indifferent to correct speech.	2. Motivate correct speech by showing the significance in social and business relationships. Appeal to pride in personal accomplishment. Encourage through judicious praise and quick recognition of improvement, however slight.
3. Ignorance of correct form of a word. The person guilty of *gyminasium* or *athalete* may not know the correct forms of these words.	3. (*a*) Stress correct enunciation and articulation in all spelling lessons. (*b*) List these troublesome words as they occur. Put a few on the board each week. Give their correct sound a number of times. Incorporate them in a sentence or two. During the day have these words sounded correctly and the sentences read, giving not more than two minutes to the drill at any one time. In the

Cause	*Remedial Measure*
	following week, present the next few words of this group. (*c*) As errors occur, show, on the board, with the aid of colored chalk, that the incorrect sound is at marked variance with the spelling of the word.

Serious Speech Defects

The study of the more serious speech defects, stammering and stuttering, cluttering, etc., their causes, diagnosis, and remedial measures, is clearly not part of the problem of teaching children to read. These speech defects are too serious for treatment by the busy class teacher. Children so afflicted must be examined by a physician and by a person trained in the treatment of serious speech defects and must receive expert individual attention. Special speech defect classes must be organized in large schools or in each school district where children can be helped to overcome ailments which otherwise often doom them to a life of melancholy solitude.

SUGGESTED READING

On Phonetics

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CHAPTER X

ORAL READING IN GRADES III–VI

Reading in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth years of the elementary school course is often a dead failure. The patient observer sees no aims in the round of lessons, no organization that is designed to achieve any specific result, and no pleasure experienced by the child. In the first two years, the method in reading, however undesirable, has system that is determined by definite and preconceived goals; in the intermediate grades reading is a transitional exercise. A selection in the class reader is announced and some child is called upon to read aloud what the others can read much more rapidly to themselves. Those who become interested in the content are penalized if they do not keep pace with the child who has been designated to plod his way through the maze of phonetic difficulties and expressional problems. Other pupils who are attentive derive the dubious benefits which come from hearing a variety of verbal mutilations and incorrect renditions. In large classes some children sometimes wait two weeks before they are victimized for this oral reading. The child who reads aloud does so, not from a rational desire to communicate to his classmates an idea that is interesting to him, but rather because he must run the gauntlet of criticism from the teacher. What wonder that these oral readings of the gems of our literature are flat and dispir-

ited, and fail to arouse in children even a faint emotional response?

The Aims of Intermediate Reading

Without a definite formulation of the ends that must be attained all methods will prove futile. What, then, are the legitimate aims of oral reading in these grades?

1. *The Technique of English.*—The first aim of intermediate reading may be to teach language structure, to give a richer vocabulary, to offer models of composition worthy of imitation, or to present some of the elements that make up the formal aspect of English. It is obvious that this aim subordinates reading for thought acquisition, and therefore has a limited application in oral reading. We must avoid reading with a microscope and a scalpel. No literary gem that throbs with life should be studied on the dissecting table. Only those facts of grammar, composition and rhetoric should be taken up in the reading lesson that arise as inescapable problems in the course of reading for thought.

2. *Information.*—A second aim of reading may be to acquire information of any interesting relation in life. The text may deal with ethical or patriotic themes; it may tell of progress in the sciences or industry or transportation; it may correlate with the grade work in history or geography. This informational aim is often condemned, because teachers turn their reading lessons into history or nature study lessons.

The informational aim which emphasizes content, stresses much rapid silent reading and sufficient oral reproduction of the text. It must therefore be given a dignified place among the aims of silent rather than oral reading.

3. *The Literary Aim.*—This is the most popular end in reading, because it offers content that is pleasurable, natural, and elevating in its aesthetic and moral appeal. Its influence on method is marked, for now the reading lesson must seek to uncover literary beauty, to instill a love for good literary form, to explain character development, to lead children to memorize what appeals most to them, so that it becomes their permanent possession.

4. *Development of the Art of Reading.*—The fourth aim of reading may be to develop in each child an ability *to read much in little time,* to sacrifice word forms for the underlying thought. Huey's indictment of reading in the schools is: We read too soon, too little, too slowly. "Too little" refers to the tendency toward overthoroughness, to the analysis of every sentence and every language difficulty; "too slowly" refers to the overemphasis on slow, laborious oral reading, with its sacred regard for every word and every comma.

It is not difficult to recognize this aim where it controls the lesson. A system of group teaching is evident. One group weak in expressive reading listens to the teacher who offers models for the pupils to imitate. A second group weak in mechanics of reading is analyzing words like *lightning* and building many others on the phonograms *ight* and *ing.* A third group is getting practice in extracting thought from the page by finding answers to questions based on a prescribed text. While it is not recommended that all reading lessons be organized on this plan, certain periods must be set aside for individualized drill along group needs.

Conclusion.—Each of these aims has its legitimate province and determines the method of the lesson. It is

for the teacher to select the aim which is to govern any lesson or series of lessons.

The Teacher's Preparation for the Reading Lesson

The success of the lesson depends to a great extent on the teacher's preparation. She must be sure that the selections are interesting and varied. If they are taken from a reader they should not follow *seriatim,* but should be grouped with a view toward comparisons. These selections must be appropriate to the season and approaching holidays. The teacher must decide on the governing aim and those devices of method which will attain the end sought. She must list the difficulties of phonetics or interpretation that can be anticipated, and then devise means of meeting them. She must have her illustrative material, pictures, dramatizations, phonetic charts, ready before the lesson begins. These matters cannot be left to the inspiration of the moment, for they are not a moment's work.

Preparing the Class for the Lesson

Before the selection is read by the children a threefold preparation may be necessary to insure its welcome reception.

1. *The Technical or Formal Preparation.*—(*a*) *Preparatory phonetic drill.* The first endeavor of the teacher must be to remove all unnecessary difficulties. On reading the selection, she feels certain that the words, *cataract, drought, descend,* and *emancipation,* which occur in the text, will be mispronounced by the children. A phonetic drill is therefore devised to forestall these errors. The children are asked to read *cat, ar, act,* as syllables, and then as rapidly as the pointer indicates, until the sound

of the word *cataract* becomes familiar. *The bough of a tree* is now written on the board, and the word *bough,* which is known to all, is selected. The teacher erases the *b,* and calls for the sound of the remaining *ough;* she now prefixes *dr,* and the children read *drough;* when the *t* is added, no child experiences any difficulty in pronouncing the word correctly. *Emancipation,* which looks formidable, is likewise syllabicated, and thus rendered simple.

The value of these phonetic drills are many: (1) Children learn how to attack new words; (2) enunciation and articulation are improved; (3) the ear is made sensitive to correct sound; (4) phonograms are constantly reviewed; (5) the children acquire confidence; (6) the occurrence of mispronunciations is reduced materially. The last gain is very significant. A child who never heard the word *drought* is ready to accept any one of a number of possible sounds. The correct pronunciation is no more attractive than the incorrect ones. If these mispronunciations are not forestalled by a phonetic drill, the class hears one of its members mispronounce the word. The teacher then corrects the erring child, and gives the correct pronunciation. At the end of the period some children waver between the two pronunciations that were heard; some remember only the incorrect one, and only a few remember the correct one. If the only pronunciation that the children hear is the correct one, this confusion of auditory impressions is greatly reduced.

(*b*) *The meaning of new words.* A second but disputed function in the technical preparation in reading is the study of new words. Some insist that all necessary new words should be explained before the actual reading is begun, in order (*a*) to insure thoughtful comprehension of

the text, (*b*) to inspire a feeling of confidence in the child, and (*c*) to secure improved expressional reading which results from proper understanding.

But experience teaches, others argue, (*a*) that comprehension is not guaranteed by a knowledge of the meaning of every word in the text. The underlying thought is deeper than the sum total of the component words or phrases. (*b*) True meaning is determined by context, hence words unknown in a list are rich in meaning when seen in natural associations. (*c*) The meaning finally derived in this analytical manner is more lasting than a mere formal definition. (*d*) What motive will the children feel for mastering a list of words, unless they see the context first and realize that understanding is dependent upon the comprehension of certain words?

Both groups of teachers take extreme attitudes. It is undoubtedly wise to let children learn to subordinate a word to the underlying thought and to derive the meaning of a given word from its context. But when the meaning of an entire sentence or paragraph is absolutely dependent upon a word or a phrase, it is equally unwise to proceed with the context which is certain to stir no thought in children's minds. The teacher's personal judgment, rather than a general rule of method, must dictate procedure in specific instructional situations.

2. *The Intellectual Preparation.*—It is evident that before any selection is read, those facts which concern the time, the place, and the cause of the incident must be given or found. In the story of "Atalanta's Race," the teacher will either have to tell the children, or lead them to find out for themselves what an important place athletics occupied in the life of the ancient Greeks. But the intellectual

preparation must be short, direct to the point, and take up an inappreciable part of the reading period. Only those facts should be brought out which will help comprehension and arouse interest in the content.

3. *The Emotional Preparation.*—But almost all of the poetic and most of the prose selections to be read make an emotional as well as an intellectual appeal. Since emotions, like ideas, are interpreted in terms of kindred experiences, it is necessary to make children emotionally receptive for the emotional appeal of what is to be read.

How can this emotional preparation be given? The simplest means is through pictures. If the lesson is descriptive of natural scenery, a picture of a beautiful landscape may serve to put the child into an appreciative attitude. The feelings of sympathy and charity, which should be in every child's breast as the "Poor Little Match Girl" is begun, can be stirred by a picture of the unfortunate little peddler. An appropriately selected picture can always arouse the emotion that should predominate in the reading lesson.

A second means of giving an emotional preparation is to place the child in the midst of the most characteristic situation of the story and let him live through the inevitable joys or sorrows. Before beginning the "Children's Hour," let the pupils imagine themselves when their own fathers come home. A few children are then called upon to tell what happens in their homes at this hour. How do their brothers and sisters express their joy at the expected arrival? What signs give evidence of their father's eagerness to be with them? If the lesson tells of the conspiracy on board Columbus's ship, the teacher is anxious to stir in her children an admiration for the bravery and the un-

flinching determination of the discoverer. Let them imagine themselves in Columbus's place, overhearing the mutiny and the dire end planned for him, and then let them decide whether they personally would have decided to continue or have granted the sailors' demands. The same procedure was used with excellent results in "Excelsior." A series of review questions elicited from the children the topography of Switzerland and the severity of the snowstorms. With this picture in their minds, they were asked, "What dangers might befall you, if you started out on a journey just as such a storm was breaking out?" As the children saw themselves in the grip of Nature's fury, they suggested, "I might lose my way," "I might be buried in the snow," "I might be frozen to death," etc. These are only a few of the tragic possibilities offered by a sixth-year class. While the children's imaginations were conjuring up added terrors of this situation, the teacher said, "Let us see what befell the boy in Longfellow's story." The children began the poem with hearts that beat with sympathy for the hero of "Excelsior." If the reading selection has an emotional message every effort must be made to put the children in the most sympathetic attitude toward it.

A third suggestion for giving an emotional preparation counsels that we forestall any improper sentiment or any possible vulgar interpretation that children may evolve. A little classroom experience enables teachers to foretell what parts of a selection to omit, what incidents to pass over, and what expressions to guard against. In a seventh-year class "The Song of the Chattahoochee" roused almost continuous mirth. The beauty of the pictures, the richness of the symbolism, the vividness of the moral lesson, the

charm of the music—all these were lost because *Chattahoochee* sounded suggestive to ears accustomed to the slang of the street. After the intellectual and the emotional preparation, but before the poem is read, the teacher should tell the class "But this river that is made so real by the poet has a peculiar name, an old Indian name, *Chattahoochee.*" Many children will undoubtedly smile, but, when the name comes up in the actual reading it is not new, and does not endanger the dignity of the poet's message.

Many a class has lost the force and the grandeur of the simple appeal for democracy in Burns' "A Man's a Man for A' That," by the coarse interpretation of the line, "The rank is but the guinea's stamp." The vulgar slang of the street, rather than the poet's gospel, was uppermost in consciousness. How can we guard against such regrettable occurrences? A simple preparation may be of service. Ask the class, "What is meant by 'the dollar is not the stamp of character'?" "How would an English child say this sentence?" The usual answer which the children give is, "The pound (£) is not the stamp of character." "How would the same English child say this, if he thought of the next higher denomination?" A titter pervades the class, but all the humor which the word can provoke is expended and the line in the poem is later read with the dignity that it merits. The experienced teacher realizes that these are not isolated examples, but rather typical of a host of instances that arise in the day's work.

The Procedure of an Intensive Oral Reading Lesson

It remains for us to set forth the detailed organization of an intensive reading lesson that seeks to make read-

ing a thought process, to develop a literary sense, and to help children toward accurate speech. In mere outline the steps in this intensive oral reading lesson are as follows:

1. Reading the selection as a whole
2. Silent reading
3. Oral reading
4. Correction and criticism of children's reading
5. Elaboration
6. Oral composition
7. Comparison and generalization
8. Final review and summary

These are the steps of a composite lesson; some of them may therefore be combined or omitted, according to the specific aim or aims that the teacher seeks to realize.

Reading the Selection as a Whole

Assuming that the preparation has been given, the next question is, "Shall the selection be read as a whole by the children at home, or by the teacher to the class?" No general law can be posited. But, in the main, it may be said that all poetical selections should be read to the class by the teacher before the detailed study is begun. This oral rendition gives the children the rhythm, the atmosphere and even, perhaps, the message of the poet. The analytical study of each stanza is more effective in developing appreciative power because of the teacher's reading. But, in the average prose selection, the dominant interest for children is the content; if it is read at home by the pupils or in class by the teacher, this story interest is satisfied, and there is no other motive that will gain for it the necessary attention. This does not mean that home reading should not be en-

couraged. It simply advises against the assignment of home lessons in reading in these intermediate grades. Every inducement should be given children to join the library and read extensively in their hours of leisure.

Silent Reading

The selection or a logical part of it may now be assigned for silent reading. Children should not be asked to read orally without the preparation afforded by silent reading. One cannot read aloud well unless he is thinking of *what* rather than *how* to read. Preparatory silent reading gives familiarity with the words and the thought of the passage and insures better oral reading.

Oral Reading

In our earlier study we noted that many authorities urge that oral reading be made the exception in school practice. We must analyze the reasons advanced by these teachers.

1. *The Case against Oral Reading.*—The arguments of the opponents of oral reading reduce themselves to four: (*a*) Oral reading tends to undermine reading for thought. The child is made so conscious of every word and punctuation mark that his whole attention is given to the symbols rather than the thought they represent. The habit of slow reading and of word consciousness makes impossible the development of habits of rapid, silent, thoughtful reading necessary in later life. (*b*) Oral reading makes the child self-conscious of his limitations of speech, and thus further occupies the mind with symbols and their utterance, rather than with thought. (*c*) In all oral reading there is serious loss of time to all children who merely listen and who are forbidden to read faster than their classmate who

reads to them. (*d*) Oral reading requires a set of abilities that the child, because of his youth, cannot possibly possess.

2. *The Case for Oral Reading.*—Despite the inestimable advantages of silent reading, oral reading must occupy a coördinate position with it in class teaching for many reasons. (*a*) The teacher must test the child's knowledge of the symbols. In rapid, silent, thought reading the child gives no evidence of what symbols he does not know. (*b*) Oral reading is a test of the thought acquired. By the voice and intonation the teacher knows that the child has the author's idea. (*c*) Clearness and accuracy of articulation and enunciation and correct use of voice are desiderata in all oral speech. It is in oral reading that the child's limitations in these speech elements are noted and appropriate drills planned for the following phonetic lessons. (*d*) Words and phrases have their own worth. They add to every pupil's expressional and interpretational vocabulary. In silent reading words and phrases may be lost in the search for the underlying thought; the oral reading words and expressions are given their true worth. (*e*) But even from the point of view of thought and artistic appreciation oral reading must be given almost equal rank with silent reading in school. The dignity, the force, the cadence and the music in literary language can better be felt in oral than in silent reading. If the reader is in doubt, let him study the results of the two forms of reading when applied either to Lincoln's Gettysburg address or to the "Song of the Chattahoochee":

Out of the hills of Habersham,
  Down the valleys of Hall,
I hurry amain to reach the plain,
  Run the rapid and leap the fall,

Split at the rock and together again,
  Accept my bed, or narrow or wide,
And flee from folly on every side
  With a lover's pain to attain the plain
Far from the hills of Habersham,
  Far from the valleys of Hall.

Suggestions for Procedure in Oral Reading

1. *Consciousness of an Audience.*—The oral reading would gain much in its appeal if the children were made to feel that they have an actual audience to whom they are telling something entertaining or instructive. The child who reads should face the class for the spirit which comes from the sight of expectant faces. Every speaker knows that the audience contributes as much to the effectiveness of his address as does his subject. Give the child, in a smaller way, the thrill of an audience. The children in their seats should often be required to shut their books and learn to listen attentively. In upper grades children should be allowed to select their own material for oral reading. That selection which appeals most to a child he should be permitted to read to his classmates. If the selection is long, two or three children who like it may divide it among them and each read his allotted share. No effective and convincing rendition is possible when a child sees the backs of his classmates' heads and is conscious that he is reading, not because he has something to say, but merely because his turn has come in the course of the teacher's endeavor to form an estimate of the pupils' reading ability.

2. *No Interruptions.*—It is imperative that the child who reads should not be stopped to correct every error he commits. These repeated interruptions make reading for

thought impossible, and cause a self-consciousness which renders every succeeding phrase more difficult to read. All corrections should be reserved for the end of the child's assignment. If the pupil's reading is very poor, he may be stopped,—for the benefit of the rest of the class,—in the middle of the paragraph or stanza; this is not an interruption, but a curtailment of the assignment.

3. *Teacher Not to Follow in the Book.*—The teacher who desires to form a true estimate of a child's clearness and accuracy of speech will find it advisable to rely solely on the auditory impressions. When she follows the child in her own book the visual impressions automatically arouse their auditory images and the teacher's ear is adjusted for the correct sound. Reading that she judged clear and accurate while she followed the printed page might become indistinct and inaccurate when the book is laid aside. Practical experiences give evidence of this fact.

4. *Assign by Thought Units.*—One usually hears teachers say: "Read the next stanza or paragraph." This is a quantitative allotment. It is well to vary this by assigning units of thought, thus, "Read the description of the classroom," or "read the greeting David received as he entered the room," or "read how David felt as he saw his new teacher." The pupil must now follow the thought and must decide for himself when his task is completed. This is a simple device to stress thought and emphasize to the pupil, that he has a definite message to convey to his classmates.

5. *The Social Spirit Must Prevail.*—Unless the motives which prompt speech in real social intercourse are present during oral reading, most of the children's renditions will

lack enthusiasm and sincerity. The initial suggestions, namely, that each child should feel that he has an audience, that he is reading something worth telling others, that the class should occasionally listen with closed books, that children be allowed to choose the selection that they would like to read to their classmates—all these ought to offer means of promoting the social spirit in oral reading. In many classes excellent bulletin boards are maintained in connection with geography and history by encouraging children to search for appropriate clippings and articles in newspapers and magazines. Once a week the best of these articles should be read to the class by the children who found them. This is oral reading, but the motive of real life is preserved in the classroom. The shorter selections in the readers should be given out to children who will feel their responsibility for the best oral rendition of these; the best compositions of each week, good answers in written tests, and intelligent results of assigned reference reading should be read orally to the class by their respective authors. Early in the term, let each pupil know that he is responsible, on a given day, for the most interesting page in a story book. These suggestions may serve to show the teacher how varied and plentiful are the devices for preserving the social spirit in all oral reading.

How to Judge Oral Reading

What qualities shall the teacher seek in the children's oral reading? The simplicity of the standard suggested is explained by the fact that it is designed only for pre-high school pupils.

1. Voice	Properly pitched, loud enough to be heard and free from shouting Modulated Free from any unpleasant quality
2. Clearness	Articulation Enunciation Pronunciation
3. Expression	An intelligent attempt to express the thought and emotions intended by the author

1. *The Voice.*—During the oral reading one constantly hears the teacher urging "Louder," "Louder" as each child in muffled tones runs through the allotted paragraph. Much of this inaudible reading is caused by the conviction in each pupil's mind that he is reading for the teacher. When the teacher approaches the child who is reciting the tone is lowered; when the teacher walks in the opposite direction the volume of voice is unconsciously increased. Give the child an audience and inspire in him the belief that he is reading something worth his classmates' attention and in most cases the voice is pitched to reach the pupils in the last row.

There is danger, as a result of constant demands for "louder reading," that the voice will be pitched too high and become noisy, strained or harsh. With such children improvement can be achieved (1) by inviting imitation of the well-modulated voice of the teacher or of other children, (2) by frequent breathing drills, and (3) by plenty of singing exercises involving "octave twists."

2. *Clearness.*—When reading lacks clearness the fault may be found, first, in the child's articulation. The term articulation has reference to the joining of sounds or

syllables into words. (*Artus,* a joint.) The common errors of articulation are (*a*) those of omission, *histry;* (*b*) those of addition, *hurted;* (*c*) those of elision of terminal sounds, *he wen' there.*

The term enunciation has reference to the utterance of sounds, usually consonant sounds. Thus, the person who says *kingk, vhich, wery, becau(sss)e,* etc., is not enunciating these sounds according to the standards of the English language.

Pronunciation is a more general term and refers to correct articulation, proper enunciation, the correct placing of the accent and the cadence of the language. The Frenchman whose articulation and enunciation in the word *difficulty* are correct is nevertheless not pronouncing the word correctly for he reads it *difficulty.* So, too, the music which is characteristic of his native tongue he carries over to the English and loses the cadence and the intonations that make the music of our language.

The methods of correcting faulty articulations, enunciations, and pronunciations are explained and illustrated in the chapter on "Phonetics." The reader is therefore referred to the appropriate headings in that chapter.

3. *Expression.*—By expression in reading is meant the oral utterance of a thought in a manner which conveys the meaning, suggests the imagery and stirs the emotions intended by the author. Proper expression is therefore a composite result, including changing pitch, voice control, speed, rhythm, emphasis, pauses, and accuracy of pronunciation. We shall not consider expression from this complex viewpoint, but take it merely as it was defined—the quality in reading which conveys to the auditor the meaning, the imagery, and the emotions of another.

The teacher of elementary grades is interested in the practical problem, "How can we train children for better expression in reading?" The suggestions for attaining this end follow:

(*a*) *Know the thought.* Consciousness is more motor than mental. Every changing idea, every transitory emotion, works itself out in some physical form. If the child knows the content and has caught its meaning he is assured of the first factor that makes for expression. The teacher can now see the value of the intellectual preparation before the reading, of using the text for oral composition and of preceding oral reading by silent reading; these are only means to a higher end—the acquisition, comprehension and expression of thought.

(*b*) *Develop self-expression.* A current fallacy holds that expressional ability is developed by incessant practice in expressing the ideas of others. If a knowledge of the thought is the first condition for expression, we can readily see that only as we insist on natural and expressive speech in all oral language and in every recitation are we training children for better expression in formal oral reading.

(*c*) *Feel the situation.* But mere comprehension is not enough in an emotional situation. The child must be made part of circumstance; he must lose himself in the fortunes and vicissitudes of the characters if he is to arouse in others the dominant feeling of the author. Children are naturally expressive. Listen to the spirited description that the little girl gives her friend of a new dress or the animated narrative of the lad who saw an athletic game! In the classroom this natural enthusiasm and this native expressiveness are lost because children are made self-conscious.

How can children be kept less self-conscious and more imaginative in the formal lesson? The first means is through skillful *emotional preparations.* These were described in detail and must therefore be dismissed here with a mere mention. A second effective means is through *dramatizations.* Let children act every appropriate situation. If the reading selection is a dialogue let two children impersonate the two characters. In the sentence, "Rather startled, he hesitatingly asked, 'Why did you send for me?'" a smooth and rapid reading should not be accepted. The child must read the question as it was asked by the startled character. When the child reads "The portly little Dutchman waddled along, puffing slowly and regularly at his pipe," ask him to execute the actions portrayed. If the paragraph contains, "With puzzled expression the old man replied, 'I hardly know why these ships are in port,'" the teacher must reject the rendition given with a confident air. Let the child assume the thinking attitude and the knit brow and his reading is now slow, thoughtful, and uncertain in tone. If these dramatizations are begun early and used regularly the children will gain facility in these renditions and retain their natural expressiveness in classroom readings.

(*d*) *Encourage a social spirit in all reading lessons.* In this chapter we took occasion to emphasize the fact that no spirited and sincere rendition of the text is possible if children read merely because they have been so ordered by their teacher who stands in judgment over them. Unless the child who reads to his classmates is actuated by a desire to communicate to them something that he knows they are anxious to hear, no expressive reading can be hoped for. Reading must never become a perfunctory exercise. The

suggestions for fostering this social spirit are enumerated in detail in the previous treatment of this topic.

(*e*) *Remove formal difficulties.* Unless the child can give himself exclusively to the thought and the interpretation of the text, expressive reading must suffer. It is for this reason that a formal preparation was suggested so that new and difficult words will not be encountered without a previous drill. From the very beginning children must read in sentences and make thought focal.

(*f*) *Frequent inflection drills.*—To break monotony in speech and in reading, give exercises in which certain words and phrases must be stressed. Thus, ask children to say, *He always scores an A,* as if the statement were true and second as if the opposite were intended. Similarly, have the following line,

Three fishers went sailing out into the west.

read to tell (1) how many fishermen went sailing; (2) who went sailing; (3) what kind of people went; (4) how they went into the west; (5) where they sailed. Such drills which exaggerate emphasis on certain words and phrases, do much to introduce inflection in otherwise very monotonous speech.

(*g*) *Imitation of the teacher* develops expressiveness in children. The trite pedagogical maxim, "Language is an imitative acquisition," suggests the important part that the teacher's speech plays in developing correct expression. The teacher whose voice is not well modulated, and whose speech is not well phrased, can hope to accomplish little in the improvement of expression in reading. No matter how real is the social spirit of the lesson or how intensely the children feel the situation, the drab tone and the

monotony of the teacher's voice will be imitated and all reading will fall into a perfunctory routine.

But mere imitation may lead to affectation. After the teacher's reading, pupils must be questioned. "Where did I raise my voice?" the teacher asks. "What comma did I pass over? Why? Where did I stop in the third sentence? Why? What words did I stress in the last sentence? Why?" Imitation that is coupled with thorough understanding develops power and gives ability to read similar or even new situations correctly. Blind imitation of the teacher's reading leaves the child as helpless as before in similar circumstances.

Correction of the Child's Reading

After a child has read orally he must receive corrections and constructive criticism. Before the teacher offers these the class must be given an opportunity to express its judgment. For this reason the outline of qualifications of good reading, that was suggested, must be kept in view of the children so that they know along what lines to criticize. The child who reads should be asked if he can correct his rendition. A pupil should be saved from criticism if he knows his own errors. His classmates should then be called upon to offer corrections and criticisms both favorable and unfavorable. One of the best means of keeping the class intent on the paragraph that is being read is to make each child feel that he may be called upon to correct his classmate. Care must be taken to avoid a spirit of priggishness, and of unjust criticism, and to allow the child who is criticised an opportunity to answer his critics.

When this reaction has been achieved by the class the teacher offers the necessary corrections and makes such

criticism as is deemed helpful. But only on the rarest occasions should the child be called upon to re-read his assignment. If the pupil next to be called on is a poor reader or has a speech defect, the teacher should read the paragraph first so that the exceptionally poor reader has a good model to imitate. It is wise, also, to have such children read privately to the teacher in order to save them from any possible humiliation or self-consciousness, and the rest of the class from listening to incorrect speech.

The Elaboration

The intensive study now demands that the elements of literary appreciation be taken up. Words whose meanings should be known, beauty of diction, character delineation, plot development, striking figures, moral issues—these should be explained.

But a word of caution is necessary in all intensive study: beware of overintensiveness. The selection that is studied must not drag; it must move forward and keep satisfying the child's desire for new situations. It is dangerous to stop for all new words, for every touch of beautiful diction or character portrayal. Every teacher must prepare her lesson with a discriminative sense that prompts liberal eliminations. In intensive literary study we must stop only at those positive elements that promote literary insight and literary appreciation.

A second word of caution advises against a common fault of directing all questions pertaining to interpretation or rhetorical analysis to the same child who has read orally. Such a procedure victimizes one child and encourages others in their mental wanderings. All questions designed to bring to the surface the literary excellence of

any text should be asked of the entire class and children should be called upon individually in some promiscuous order. Unless the self-activity of each child is aroused and continuously directed in a highly-socialized recitation, the elaboration of the reading text becomes futile and deadening.

Oral Composition

At every important logical pause in the selection the class should be stopped for an informal discussion of the text. The questions should be broad and liberal and designed to summarize, to elicit opinions, and to provoke thoughtful reactions to various situations. The endeavor throughout should be to encourage spontaneous and enthusiastic expression. If children, in the course of their talk, glance at the page and incorporate such words and phrases as they feel will express their meaning best, no condemnatory remark should be made. A child who does this has already acquired such an appreciation of the worth of certain verbal elements as to incorporate them into his expressional vocabulary. Every intensive reading lesson must furnish opportunity for rich and interesting oral composition and must make its contribution toward the development of the child's expressional powers.

Comparisons and Generalizations

After having decided on the appropriate reading matter for any given part of the term, the teacher should try to group the individual selections in such a way that interesting comparisons will result from having similar or opposite themes follow in succession. If the "Children's Hour" is to be read for the first lesson, the "First Snowfall" should be selected for the second. In the comparison the children can be led to see that the theme, parental love, is

the same in both, but while the one is written in a major key, happy and buoyant, the other is in the minor key so that the reader may share the father's tragedy. To the children such a comparison makes each poem richer in associations, permanent in impression and deeper in appreciation. An examination of any good literary reader will reveal a host of opportunities for similar comparisons that allow for most interesting oral composition.

But comparisons bring to the surface not only differences but underlying likenesses which serve as the basis of all generalization. If at the end of the comparison a moral principle can be drawn, or a useful generalization elicited, it would be unwise to neglect it. But the teacher should omit this step if she feels that the comparisons will be forced or that the selection must be bled for a moral.

Final Review and Summary

A final question in the intensive literary study concerns itself with the re-reading of the selection. In the main, prose selections should not be re-read because their main interest for the children lies in their content. Much more can be done for the children by having them read new matter. But with a poem circumstances differ. There the main interest lies in the treatment of the theme, in the language and the rich imagery. After an analytical study of each stanza a final reading of the whole poem by the teacher unifies it in the minds of the children and leaves them with a rich and rhythmic impression of the poet's message.

The final review of the content of any selection, whether prose or poetic, can be made interesting, not by exact reproduction, but by a discussion of broad comparative questions. A few of these are offered by way of illustration:

Suggest another but equally appropriate title for this story.

If you were to write the story of this poem, how many paragraphs would you make? Give the topic of each.

What stanza in this poem tells most about X's character, most about his life? Prove your answer by comparing it with others.

Who in to-day's lesson is the exact opposite of A in the last selection? Contrast the two.

Point out three striking qualities in the character of B. Tell what he does, and what he says that show these traits.

Can you give a temptation in your own life that is parallel to the temptation felt by B?

Types of Errors in Oral Reading

Studies made with the aid of *Gray's Oral Reading Test* reveal the following errors and their frequency:[1]

1. Insertions		
Of words or letters	14 per cent	
Of portions	10 per cent	
		24 per cent
2. Substitutions		24 per cent
3. Repetitions		15 per cent
4. Omissions		
Of words or letters	8 per cent	
Of portions	7 per cent	
		15 per cent
5. Mispronunciation		
Error of accent	4 per cent	
Error of vowel	2 per cent	
General	3 per cent	
		9 per cent
6. Miscellaneous and Infrequent Errors		13 per cent

[1] Based on findings reported by Anderson and Merton, *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 20, May-June, 1920.

It would seem reasonable to say that the errors in order of frequency are: substitutions, insertions, repetitions, omissions, mispronunciations, and lack of expressiveness. The remedial measures have been considered in detail in this chapter. We may sum them up here:

1. Give children as much practice in oral reading as possible.
2. Be sure to require preparatory silent reading before oral reading.
3. Through repeated drills and reviews insure mastery of the mechanics of reading.
4. Allow for the natural shortcomings of language in immature pupils.
5. Establish a social spirit in oral reading which introduces genuine motivation.
6. Expect errors because of the idiosyncrasies of the apperceptive processes.

Considerable space was given to all but the last suggestion. We shall therefore address ourselves to it.

Reading Errors Due to Defective Apperception

The mind interprets incoming experiences in terms of its related old ideas for which it is habitually set. Therefore, in reading, we see what is not before the eye. Preferences, aversions, hopes and fears; these enter without our knowing into the interpretive process. On this bases we may undertake to explain errors of the following types:

1. *Errors Due to Desire to Form a Known Word.*—The child therefore reads *being well* for "well being" because he knows the former construction very well. It is not difficult to understand why a pupil read "That slovenly

person had his fill to-day," as *That slovenly person had his filth to-day.*

2. *Errors Due to Personal Desire.*—The child who was very much touched by the predicament of the hero of a story read, *He saw a way to save his dog,* completely ignoring the fact that the text said, *He saw no way.* Here again mind masters reality and changes it to suit its desires.

Extensive Reading Lessons

The practical teacher sees at once serious inherent limitations in the intensive reading lessons as outlined in the preceding pages. It is obvious that too limited an amount would be covered in the time allotted to reading, and consequently too little literature would be read in the school course. The degree of thoroughness prescribed would enable a teacher to call on too few children in any one period. In a class of forty most pupils would recite only once in a fortnight. The limitations of intensive reading make necessary extensive reading lessons.

1. *Objects of Extensive Reading.*—There are two ends that must be served in extensive reading: (1) more practice in reading must be provided for the children, and (2) a familiarity with a wide field of literature must be given. These two aims can be attained in extensive reading, for unlike intensive reading, its object is not thorough, sympathetic comprehension and accurate interpretation, but rather an acquaintanceship with the gems of language.

2. *Extensive Reading Designed to Give Practice in Oral Reading.*—Early in the term teachers should set aside those selections of the term's reading which are simple and require a minimum of explanation and elaboration. These should be reserved for extensive reading and should

be given to the class as frequently as the proficiency of the children seems to indicate. The preparation for the extensive reading lesson is the same as for the intensive. But in the reading itself oral discussion and elaboration are usually eliminated; the children read and are corrected. At logical pauses the main trend of the selection is reviewed briefly and oral reading is again taken up. Since the quantitative side of reading and practice in oral rendition are the aims, this procedure is designed to meet them.

3. *Extensive Reading for Familiarity with Literature: Silent Reading.*—But if the aim is to give a wider acquaintance with literature, many supplementary aids must be sought. (1) Oral reading and elaborations should be reduced and silent reading encouraged. (2) Every attempt should be made to have children read at home in the hours of leisure. Special periods should be set aside when children report to their classmates on the books they read and illustrate their talk by oral readings of the most favored parts. These reports are successful aids toward starting children to read. (3) Reading circles organized and directed by teachers produce these same results. (4) Where possible, select a long story like *Ten Boys, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Robinson Crusoe,* for serial reading by the teacher. (5) Regular periods when stories are told or read to the class can be made very suggestive if the teacher will at the end of each narration offer a list of similar stories and their authors. (6) Where each class has a class library, as in the New York City schools, the teacher should study the library record carefully and find reasons why some children do not read or why certain good books are unread. This cannot be done unless the system for keeping

this record is convenient and gives all the necessary information at a glance. The following chart which is ruled on a large cardboard has proved very helpful:

LIBRARY RECORD, CLASS 6B[1], P. S. No. —
TERM BEGINNING FEBRUARY, 1925

The Class	The Books				
	Ten Boys	*Uncle Tom's Cabin*	*Wild Animals I Have Known*	*Poor Boys Who Became Famous*	*Around the World in 80 Days*
Adams, William....	2/8	2/15	2/26		
Brown, James.....		2/8	2/15		
Conroy, John.....	2/24		2/8		
Davis, Henry.....	2/15		2/8		
Ellson, Morris.....					2/8
(Names					
arranged					
alphabetically).					

Enter in appropriate space date when each book is taken; Adams, Wm., read three books, taken Feb. 8, 15 and 26, respectively.

Draw colored line through date when a book is returned in good condition.

Such a record takes little time to keep, and shows at a glance what books are popular, what boys read, and how much each boy reads. Knowing these facts, the teacher can take measures to increase the popularity of a good book and to encourage a child who does not read.

Suggested Reading

Bobbitt, Franklin, *The Curriculum* (Houghton Mifflin Co.), Ch. xviii.

Briggs and Coffman, *Reading in Public Schools* (Row, Peterson & Co.), Chs. xiv, xv, xviii, xx.

Chubb, P., *The Teaching of English,* Chs. vii, x.

Clark, S. H., *How to Read Aloud* (Chicago University Publications, 1897).

Goldwasser, I. E., *Method and Methods in the Teaching of English,* Ch. v.

Haliburton and Smith, *Teaching of Poetry in the Grades* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Laing, Mary E., *Reading: A Manual for Teachers,* Chs. iv, v, vi, xii, xiii, xiv.

McMurry, Charles A., *Special Method in Reading for the Grades* (Macmillan Co.).

Taylor, J. S., *Principles and Methods of Teaching Reading,* pp. 128-162.

Wheat, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Chs. xv, xvi.

CHAPTER XI

DEVELOPING POWER IN SILENT READING

Special Importance of Silent Reading in Modern Life

In the last decade silent reading has come into its own. This change in the importance of the subject is traced not to a passing pedagogical whim but to a significant demand of modern life. In a scientific curriculum, subjects are accorded their place in accordance with life's needs. Why stress silent reading?

1. *For Self-Education.*—If the ideal is to make the pupils independent of the teacher, then she must give them control over the instruments of self-education. Intellectual progress in school as well as out of it is conditioned to a great extent by power to read quickly and effectively. The abundance of worthwhile reading matter makes intelligent and economic reading more important than ever. In former days knowledge was handed down by word of mouth. To-day, it is set down in type.

2. *For Intelligent Citizenship.*—With the growing complexity of our social, political and economic life, it is necessary, for an understanding of our controlling institutions, to become a regular reader of newspapers and magazines. An uninformed citizenry produces a society without a real foundation.

3. *To Acquire Power to Study.*—He who cannot read well cannot study. Ability to read stands in very close

relationship to study. Many failures in school subjects can be traced to inability to extract the thought from the printed page. Pupils who can read well have taken the first and perhaps the most important step toward academic success in all subjects.

4. *For Recreation.*—Education for leisure is as important as education for occupation. The slow, ponderous reader can never experience the real joy of recreational reading.

5. *For Psychological Reasons.*—Our detailed study of the psychology of the reading process established certain fundamental truths. Chief among these are: progress in oral reading does not guarantee equal progress in silent reading; overdrill in oral reading develops a set of habits that may hinder progress in silent reading; rapid reading and intelligent reading are usually related; vocal aids in silent reading are distinct handicaps to intelligent reading. It follows, therefore, that only as emphasis in the class is laid on silent rather than oral reading are our pupils prepared for the reading demands of life.

Silent and Oral Reading Further Contrasted

Before attacking the practical classroom problems of silent reading, we must make sure that we understand the characteristics of the various types of reading. The term silent reading is now giving way to *assimilative* or *interpretative* or *acquisitive* reading because the vital aspect of this kind of reading is not that it is silent, but rather that content must be acquired within a reasonable time.

An arrangement of contrasting columns may help to emphasize the differences between the two kinds of reading:

Oral Reading	Silent, or Acquisitive, or Interpretative Reading
I. Physiological Characteristics	
1. More eye sweeps and pauses	1. Fewer eye sweeps and pauses
2. Longer time at fixation point	2. Shorter time at fixation point
II. Psychological Characteristics	
1. Long chain of association: visual percept, auditory image, vocal motor image, thought	1. Shorter chain of association: visual percept, thought; other images are greatly dimmed
2. Vocal aspect the most vital	2. Aim is to reduce all vocal contributions
3. Unit of recognition small	3. Unit of recognition larger
4. In the main, reveals power to recognize words	4. In the main, test power to acquire thought
III. Pedagogical Characteristics	
1. More natural at beginning because of its relation to oral speech	1. A new process from the very beginning because thought must be acquired by interpreting arbitrary symbols
2. It is therefore conditioned by capacity of utterance	2. It is therefore conditioned by capacity for recognition of ideas
3. Fundamental purpose is to convey information	3. Fundamental purpose is to acquire information

In the light of this contrast, it seems futile to believe that the mind set and the habits for successful everyday reading can be developed through excessive oral reading in the class.

Types of Silent Reading Differentiated

But silent reading varies with the text and the ultimate objective. One may read *Ethan Frome* or *The Promised Land* for the story only. Reading is here undertaken for its recreational value. On the other hand, each of these books may be made the means of teaching children fundamental literary qualities and the art of critical literary analysis. From this illustration, it is obvious that there are at least two distinct kinds of silent reading which we must now contrast.

Acquisitive Reading	Interpretative Reading
1. Reading for general information or story.	1. Reading to help meet a definite need or solve a specific problem.
2. It is undertaken for recreational purpose. It is akin to play for the interest is in the process and has no final goal.	2. It is undertaken to resolve a situation that urges the mind to find a solution. It is akin to work, for the whole process is governed by the end.
3. No critical attitude is taken and frequently this reading becomes a non-assimilative experience.	3. It is critical and thoroughly assimilative.
4. There is no selective process here.	4. This reading is highly selective.
5. As data are acquired no effort is made to work them over into an organization of our own. This is therefore not the reading that is so vital in the study technique.	5. As data are acquired, they are organized. This is therefore the reading that constitutes the very essence of study.

In all silent reading lessons, we must make certain that we identify the end in view. If the reading is merely acquisitive then the method is certainly different from that followed in a highly interpretative lesson. In our study of how to develop silent reading power, we shall therefore group the suggestions according to these contrasting columns.

Dangers in Speed Reading

While rate is important, we must not make silent reading synonymous with speed reading. Speed must never be attained at the expense of thought. It must ever be remembered that the primary object of silent reading is to obtain thought. Nor must reading be so rapid that it produces careless perception with its attending misinterpretations. Where speed transcends rational limits no attention is paid to the refinement of a thought once the central idea is caught. But the modifications and limitations may really contain the essence of the idea. We must therefore guard against the sacrifice of accuracy of comprehension to speed. Too often teachers who employ devices for increasing speed are not alive to the danger of diminishing comprehension.

How to Develop Power in Acquisitive Reading

The fundamental habit that children must be led to acquire for this type of silent reading is to associate symbol directly with idea through the subordination of auditory and vocal motor images. We shall arrange, in graded series, a set of suggestions designed to repress speech and sound images of words and lead the mind to see in each printed word the idea it represents.

Begin with Identifying Single Words

1. *Identification of Nouns.*—Words which are names are exhibited in rapid succession on flash cards. As each —*desk, glass, sky*—is shown, the child points to the object named.

2. *Recognition of Verbs.*—In similar manner, words which are verbs are exhibited and the pupils perform the appropriate action.

3. *Adjectives and Adverbs.*—Quality words do not lend themselves so readily to silent identification. The teacher says, "Point to objects which are . . ." and shows the word,*white;* "Tell me people who are . . ."—now exhibiting cards with the word *kind.* Adverbs are identified in similar ways.

4. *Giving Similar and Opposite Word.*—An interesting drill is to exhibit words on cards and ask pupils to give words that have similar or opposite meanings. *Tall* was shown and the pupils volunteered *large, big, high,* and *giant.* For opposites they gave, *small, short, little, tiny.* While these answers lack dictionary precision, they nevertheless serve the purpose very well.

Identifying Reading Phrases

5. *Carrying out Action Indicated by a Phrase.*—The command "stand," is given. Various places where a child might stand are listed in a succession of phrases:

1. in front of John
2. in the rear
3. near Mary
4. next to Walter
5. on the seat
6. at my desk

As the teacher points to 3, 4, 2, or 5, the designated child stands in the appropriate place. Pupils thus learn to see

thought when they look at words and become attentive to prepositions, the little words.

6. *Supplying Incomplete Parts.*—Incomplete expressions are put on the board. To illustrate:

1. in the . . .	3. next to . . .
2. near . . .	4. beside . . .

When a child is assigned number 3, he reads silently *next to* and then says, "my friend," or "Peter." What is spoken gives evidence that the words on the board have been read without vocalization.

7. *Finding Phrases.*—The class is told to find in sentences or in a very short paragraph, expressions like, *to the brook, will not go,* which are on the board.

Silent Reading of Sentences

8. *Obeying Imperative Sentences.*—A number of imperative sentences is presented on a large chart or on the board, thus:

1. Show me your pen.
2. Look at the sky.
3. Come to me.
4. Ask your friend to play.

At the teacher's direction, "Walter, read number four," the pupil says to a friend, "Henry, come and play with me." It is evident that Walter saw the succession of symbols and extracted the thought without actually reading the fourth imperative sentence aloud.

9. *Answering Interrogative Questions.*—This device is similar to the one described above. An element of pleasing humor can be introduced not only through the ques-

tions asked but also through appropriate assignment of certain queries.

10. *Finding Sentences in Paragraphs.*—A given sentence is shown on the board and children must skim through a paragraph to find it. Another and more advanced exercise is to require the class to find the sentence which says that the pilot decided to bring the ship into shallow water. Here the pupils scan every line until they find the sentence which says, "The wheelman realized that he must bring his boat as high up on the beach as possible." When the children find the sentence, they identify it, not by reading it aloud but by giving its number in the paragraph. Here again children are learning to make as direct an association of symbol with thought as circumstances permit.

11. *Completing Incomplete Sentences.*—The pupils read the incomplete sentences silently and then give aloud the words or phrases necessary to complete the thought intended. How does this device add to the child's power to read silently?

12. *Making a Situation True.*—A class usually finds this device very amusing. Sentences are presented on a large chart and the children are required to change something in the room which will make each statement express an actual condition. The successive sentences before the class were:

1. John has a perfect arithmetic paper on his desk.
2. Henry has the best written spelling book in his hand.
3. Mary has a cent in her left hand.
4. The window pole is lying on the floor near the window.

John was called to read sentence 1. He looked at it,

walked over to the star pupil, took the perfect paper from him and placed it on his own desk. Mary, who was to read number 3, whispered to her neighbor who produced a cent. Mary then carried out the facts in her sentence. Here too there is room for good-natured fun which gives pupils a serious by-product, intimate association of symbols and ideas with minimum vocal motor accompaniment.

Dramatization as an Evidence of Silent Reading

13. *Dramatizing a Slogan.*—Ask children to carry out, in the most fitting way, each of the following catch expressions:

Safety First Campaign	Stop! Look! Listen! Blow your horn. Look both ways before crossing. Don't be a jay walker.
Better Health Campaign	Swat the fly. Wear out the tooth brush and save the tooth. Chew, your stomach has no teeth. Smile, and you'll meet a smile.

The reverse procedure is often more appealing. A child selects one of these slogans and proceeds to dramatize it. His classmate whom he calls must give the number of the slogan acted before the class. It takes a poor teacher to reduce a drill of this kind to drudgery.

14. *Carrying Out the Directions in a Play.*—Some of the stories of the class reader that proved to be especially appealing were to be dramatized. The teacher hung before the class a large sheet of paper on which was written in crayon:

THE DAUGHTER WHO FOUND THE WAY

A play based on a story of the same title

The Woodsman.....John W.
The Mother.....Mary H.
Etc.

[The first scene takes place in the living room. A large table is in the center. Two chairs stand near the window and a fire is burning in the fireplace.]

At the signal the actors took their places. A pupil was called upon to "make the scene." He pushed the teacher's desk, "the large table" into the center of the space in front of the stationary pupil desks and seats. A second pupil placed two chairs near the window; a third drew a rectangle without a base on the board and labelled it "Fireplace." John stood before the fire and warmed his hands.

Throughout these preliminaries, little was said but much was read. The teacher was the only person who knew that this was a reading lesson. The pupils were acquiring useful reading habits while intent on other purposes.

Many of the previous suggestions may well be classified as dramatizations. This is especially true of suggestions 2, 5, 8, and 12.

Games for Silent Reading

15. *Solving Riddles.*—A mimeographed sheet of time-honored and recent riddles is given to each pupil. The reading lesson consists of the silent reading of a designated riddle and guessing the answer. Riddle number one asks,

A riddle, a riddle, as I suppose,
A thousand eyes and never a nose!

Some suggest "a potato," others, "the sky," still others, "a sieve." It is evident that some answers are probably correct while others are certainly wrong. Much spirited oral discussion follows the silent reading of riddles and the suggestion of probable answers. Here we have excellent oral composition closely correlated with silent reading.

16. *Races.*—The devices numbered 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 lend themselves to effective contests of speed. Call these races and the competitive spirit is alive.

Finding Answers to Questions Based on a Paragraph

17. *Finding Answers to Preparatory Questions.*—Before asking the class to read a paragraph two or three questions are presented on the board. The task for the pupils is to read the paragraph silently and then find answers to the questions set before them. Reading is hence made a process of thought finding.

18. *Answering Questions After a Small Portion of the Text Is Read.*—With children who have developed a little reading power, questions should be asked after the assigned text has been read. These questions may take one of many forms:

(*a*) The traditional questions on the facts in the text
(*b*) Suggesting suitable titles for the text
(*c*) Finding the topic sentence of each paragraph

Getting the Thought of a Large Part or of a Whole Story

19. *Suggesting Titles for a Selection of a Story.*—After the class has read a logical part of the text, suitable titles are called for. If the teacher gives the first few, the children usually follow with others. An interesting discussion of the relative merits of each suggested title usually takes

place. Both the silent reading and the oral composition are thoroughly motivated for the pupils. They re-read parts of the text in search of data to uphold their contentions.

20. *Making Summaries.*—A popular means of giving evidence of silent reading is to make a summary or a synopsis of the assigned reading.

21. *Taking True-False and Multiple Judgment Tests.*—To give practice in silent reading, plan many true-false or plus-minus or yes-no tests in the major subjects. Thus in arithmetic, the child is asked to indicate which of the following statements are true and which false:

1. A fifth is greater than a fourth.
2. If I sell for 12¢ and lose 3¢ the cost is greater than 12¢.
3. If 3 apples cost 5¢, 9 apples will cost 18¢.
4. $\frac{1}{2}$ of $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ give the same answer.
5. $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ give the same answer.

This kind of test is followed in hygiene, history, geography, and English. Of course, the true-false test should be supplemented by a completion test and a multiple judgment test. In these types of tests the child must perforce give himself to the task of neglecting auditory and vocal motor imagery and associating symbol directly with thought. This is clearly seen in the following example of a selection test in which the pupil underlines that part of the statement that makes the whole statement true:

Test in Hygiene—Disease Carrier

1. Germs are killed at a temperature of 50°, 100°, 212°, 70° F.
2. Germs grow rapidly at a temperature of 30°, 100°, 200°, 70° F.

3. Germs breed most rapidly on the skin, on the hair, in the mouth, in clothing, etc.

22. *Reading to Carry Out an Exposition.*—When purely expository text is read, it is well to ask children to draw or to perform what the printed page directed. A class often enjoys the manual of the Boy Scouts or the Girl Scouts of America or a manual of games and athletics. After reading *How to Tie a Knot That Will Hold* in the scout manual, let children carry out the directions. Similarly, with ruler and pencil, they may lay out a tennis court to scale on their paper. Here is silent reading for a purpose and also an excellent test of comprehension.

23. *Discussing a Problem on the Basis of a Given Text.*—Any problem recitation can be utilized for the purpose of effective silent reading. A current magazine article speaks of vigorous competition offered by Argentine Republic to the United States in the cattle markets of the world. Why can Argentine Republic compete against us? The geography text offers some data. The article itself offers more. The two are read to discover the natural advantages enjoyed by Argentine Republic, the lower cost of labor, cheaper shipments *et al.* The class is concerned with the problem and regards this as a lesson in geography. To the teacher this lesson is significant not for its geographic information but rather for the practice it gives pupils in finding thought on the page.

24. *Reading Much Outside of Class Assignments.*—Power to read develops, in a measure, with reading. Teachers must encourage outside reading. To this end, it is well to keep in mind the following aids:

(*a*) Magazine reading for current events and information that supplements class work. *The World's Work, The*

National Geographic Magazine, The Outlook, The Independent are a few of the magazines suitable for this type of school use.

(*b*) Encourage membership in the local public library and distribute copies of specially prepared reading lists. These can be obtained through any library.

(*c*) Encourage the class library. Many successful collections have been made by pupil contributions. In two or three semesters a helpful library is established.

(*d*) Credit outside reading. It is not a difficult matter to formulate a plan of crediting outside reading. Children present evidence of their reading and thus augment their grades in this subject.

Through these means children develop reading technique, acquire information that liberates them from their own narrow sphere, grow in language power and gradually attain the joy of reading.

The Conduct of the Silent Reading Lesson

1. *Which of the Devices Should Be Used?*—Supervisors are often confronted by teachers who insist that silent reading cannot be done by pupils in the introductory grades because "only those who can read fairly well orally can read silently." The fallacy of this position was demonstrated in the study of the psychology of reading. The list of graded silent reading exercises given above shows that the first five or six devices can readily be introduced in the very first grade and in the very first fortnight of reading. There must be at least as much silent reading as oral reading in the introductory school year.

Teachers often find pupils in the middle of the school course or even higher who are abject slaves of vocal reading. Unless lips are moved and each word is actually uttered, these children cannot obtain thought from the

printed page. It is common to find teachers assigning a paragraph to these pupils for silent reading and then insisting that a summary be given. To assign a task, presupposes the possession of ability necessary to perform it. These youngsters have not the necessary reading habits. Assigning tasks does not guarantee their performance. Discouraging as it may seem, there is only one line of action for the teacher: segregate these pupils and subject them to the graded silent reading exercises listed above. It may be necessary to begin with number one or it may be possible to begin with number five. Step by step, the teacher must develop in these young minds the power to associate symbol and idea. The practices of the first year may thus be followed with certain pupils of the sixth year. Pupil ability and pupil deficiency are the deciding factors.

2. *Have a Clearly Defined Purpose.*—No reading lesson can be successful unless the teacher knows definitely what is to be attained. Is the selection read because it gives useful information that supplements class work in history? Is there an ethical situation that will serve as the basis of a class discussion? Does the teacher desire to give the class an example of a Kipling tale? Is it the purpose of to-day's lesson to acquaint the pupils with a selection from a book hoping that they will be impelled to read the whole story? Let the class know the object of the lesson. Do not hesitate to ask at the close of the period, "Have we attained our goal?" Purpose gives direction to the lesson, shapes the method, indicates the terminal point and tells definitely whether the instruction has been successful.

3. *Prepare the Class for the Selection.*—The preparatory step in silent reading differs in no marked degree from that in the oral reading. Since the preparatory step

is outlined fully there, the reader is referred to the discussion of this topic in the chapter on Oral Reading.

4. *How Much Shall Be Assigned.*—The quantity to be assigned for silent reading varies from a single word to an entire selection. The pupils' experience in silent reading and the character of their responses will determine whether to assign a single sentence, a paragraph or a logical section of a story.

5. *How to Assign Silent Reading.*—The simplest method of making an assignment is merely to indicate the number of paragraphs or the stopping point. This mechanical procedure is not of course incorrect. A more rational mode is to assign by thought. Ask the pupils to read the reasons Stella gave herself for disobeying her mother or to read the description of all the pictures that came to the mind of the old man as he beheld the little village of his youth lying at the bottom of the valley. Each pupil must constantly keep the thought uppermost in his mind to discover his terminal reading point.

6. *Limit the Time.*—It is unwise to permit children to take as much time as they think they need for an assignment and signify by closing their books when they are ready. We are familiar enough with the significance of rate in reading to encourage unnecessarily slow reading. The teacher should decide on the time and all must be ready at the signal. In this way, the children are learning to work at maximum capacity and developing ability to concentrate on a task.

7. *Call for Results.*—When the time is up, hold the pupils responsible for results. Children have learned to take oral reading seriously but they attach little dignity to silent reading. Call for results and for class criticism

of them. Let pupils know that they are being rated as much for silent as for oral reading. The various means of expressing the results of silent reading by answering questions, asking questions, dramatization, drawing, games, suggesting titles, making summaries, etc., are explained at great length in the preceding topic. For many children, the mark serves as a motivating agent.

How to Develop Power in Interpretative or Assimilative Reading

This type of reading must be taught in close relationship to the study work in all subjects. The child must learn that studying is not merely re-reading the text but rather concentrating attention on the solution of an academic problem. Not the number of times the page is read but the intensity of the attention with which it is read determines effectiveness of study. Hence interpretative reading is developed when the class is intent on the solution of a problem that seems vital to them. Preparation is being made for Safety Week. It is evident that the class must find the causes of accident and preventive measures. Hence there is a task calling for vigorous application.

Processes Involved in Interpretative Reading

In effective study, there are at least five processes that are involved. These presuppose five abilities, namely:

1. Mastery of reading technique
2. Power to comprehend text selected for the pupils' grade
3. Ability to organize data
4. Capacity for retention of information found and organized
5. Habit of taking a critical attitude towards experience

The development of reading technique has occupied our attention throughout the preceding chapter. Retention is increased with the quality of organization of material. The habit of assuming a critical attitude towards experience is either native or results from the type of teaching that the child receives. These two problems are not especially related to the functions of the reading lesson. We shall therefore address ourselves to the other factors in interpretative reading—comprehension and organization.

How to Quicken the Comprehension of the Text

Native intelligence, reading ability and language power determine almost wholly capacity to comprehend the printed text. Certain school practices may aid in quickening understanding.

1. *Teach pupils the technique of the dictionary.* A carefully graded series of exercises should teach children how to find words, how to ascertain the pronunciation, syllabication, and meaning, and finally how to obtain for themselves some of the rich body knowledge contained in the dictionary. Through repeated assignments the dictionary habit should be inculcated. Unless these exercises are made an integral part of the course in English in all grades from the fifth upwards, children will not establish a helpful acquaintance with the dictionary.

2. *Introduce children to reference reading.* Surely, children of junior high school age can be taught how to find information in books of ready reference.

3. *Teach pupils to perceive,* as early in their study as possible, *the end or the purpose of the immediate task.* The aim, clearly posited, becomes the standard of selection of material. If the class is to aid in the campaign for

greater safety in a New England city, then there is no need to read up on typhoons, monsoons, and earthquakes as causes of loss of life. Rather, they must direct attention to automobile traffic, carelessness in shop and home, cause of fire, the means of disseminating disease—in a word, all the forces in their environment that make for danger.

4. *Teach pupils to adopt a tentative outline* so that each fact, as acquired, can readily be placed in its suitable category.

5. *Teach pupils to apply the test,* "Am I securing a satisfactory answer to my initial question? Is the problem clearing up? Am I satisfied with my answers and my conclusions?"

How to Organize the Data of Interpretative Reading

1. *Meaning of Organization.*—The term organization refers to a complex process that is the result of highly focalized attention, analysis, selection by careful evaluation, and finally synthesis. Organize, preparatory to teaching, the geographical facts about Holland or any interesting country. What facts do you recall? What situations do you analyze? Which facts are selected? Which rejected? What is your standard of selection? How do you synthesize the data you deem worthy of inclusion in the lesson? What degree of attention was required to complete this task within a reasonable time?

Data are well organized when they follow in logical sequence, move toward certain definite ends, and show clearly relative importance of various subtopics. Without successful organization, the study process lacks foundation.

2. *How Develop Power to Organize?*—There are many devices that give children an increasing power to organize facts acquired in study. To some of these we shall now direct attention.

(*a*) *Justifying the key sentence of a paragraph.* More important than finding the topic sentence is proving that it is the topic sentence by examining every sentence to discover whether it really belongs in the paragraph in which it is included.

(*b*) *Suggesting titles.* Ask pupils to suggest titles for paragraphs, sections of a selection and for the whole selection. Examine each title offered. What in the selection makes the first title appropriate? What makes it inappropriate? Which of the titles shall be put into the most desirable group? Here is an exercise that develops selective judgment and stirs keen desire to participate in a discussion. What better illustration of highly motivated oral composition.

(*c*) *Recasting a whole selection.* (1) After careful reading of a selection, let us plan to reproduce it in two or three or four paragraphs. What shall the theme of each paragraph be? What shall each include? (2) Changing the sequence. Let us begin this story with an episode from the middle or the end. Now what sequence shall we follow? (3) Changing the point of view. Let us tell the story of the rescue of Captain John Smith as he would tell it; as Pocahontas would modestly relate the story; as the Indian chief would probably report the occurrence. (4) Recasting a story for dramatization, for a pageant, for a scenario. Each of these devices teaches a different mode of organization and leads to interesting and usually effective composition lessons.

(*d*) *Pupils prepare questions on a text.* After a selection or a logical portion of it is read, each pupil prepares a question designed to cover the most important facts. These are submitted to class criticism and to a debate on their relative importance. The questions finally accepted as the best are arranged in logical sequence.

(*e*) *Coöperative development of an outline.* A set of facts found in various readings is submitted for organization. Through the teacher's questions and the ensuing discussion the class decides on the number of paragraphs, the title of each, the content of each, and the most effective introduction and conclusion. Children work together, exchange ideas and achieve a coöperative product, an outline.

(*f*) *Planning illustrations for a selection.* After a story is read, the class is confronted with the task of making our specifications for the artist. In a thoroughly socialized recitation these problems are discussed: What points or situations need graphic illustrations? What shall each illustration show? Can the situation in question really be pictured?

(*g*) *Deciding on the facts necessary to solve a problem.* In the development of a subject, a pivotal problem arises. The class in general science knows that cold contracts and heat expands; that water becomes ice at approximately 32° F. But how much of the lake becomes ice? Why only the top foot of water? What would happen to all the life in the lake if the ice formed all the way to the bottom?

Here are vital questions that must be answered. What facts must we know? Where shall we find them? Why is it futile to discuss these problems without these facts? Now there is a genuine motive for interpretative reading

and a real object to be attained in the study process that ensues.

Errors in Silent Reading and Their Causes

Frequency of Each Type of Error

An analysis of results obtained by giving reading tests with the Monroe and Thorndike Silent Reading Scales reveals the following types of errors and their frequency:[1]

	Per Cent	
1. Inadequacy of interpretational vocabulary	33	
2. Inability to find essential idea	19	
3. Omission of part of idea due to short unit of visual recognition	14	
4. Inability to get definite information when vocabulary was adequate	13	
		79
5. Other causes:		
(*a*) Related to vocabulary	3	
(*b*) Related to cause number 4, above	4	
(*c*) Related to cause number 2, above	8	
(*d*) Carelessness	4	
		19
		98

It is clear that there are two classes of defects in silent reading, the first has to do with *rate in reading,* the second, with *comprehension.*

[1] Compiled from facts submitted by Anderson and Merton. *Elementary School Journal,* Vol. 20, May-June, 1920.

UNSATISFACTORY RATE IN SILENT READING

Cause of Unsatisfactory Rate	Result	Remedial Measure
1. Shifting attention	1. Reading too slow or too fast	1. Assign by thought. Give shorter assignment. Hold responsible for results. Motivate by showing loss due to inattention.
2. Overcarefulness	2. Reading too slow	2. Praise for care and attention. Explain need for reasonable speed. Encourage more rapid reading and keep personal record of improvement in speed.
3. Span of perception short, eye movements frequent	3. Slow reading	3. See 2 above. Give exercises of following type: present phrases on flash cards. Increase length of phrases. Give practice in board reading and tie reading phrases together by loops. Let child know his difficulty and objects of the drills.
4. Pauses too long	4. Reading too slow	4. See 2 above.
5. Excessive inner speech	5. Reading slow and probably not as intelligent	5. Explain danger of lip movement and inner speech. Encourage their repression. Let pupil keep graph of his progress in speed and elimination of vocalization.
6. Inadequate knowledge of language	6. Reading too slow	6. Stress oral English and vocabulary building. Reading cannot improve unless vocabulary is enriched through all other experiences.
7. Temperamental	7. Reading too slow or too rapid	7. Sweet reasonableness and encouragement. Probably little improvement will be achieved.
8. Limited intelligence	8. Reading too slow	8. A task beyond scope of the teacher. Be satisfied when child shows maximum effort.

DIFFICULTIES OF COMPREHENSION IN SILENT READING

Cause	Remedial Measure
1. Limited knowledge of language.	1. See remedial measures to number 6 under rate.
2. Limited experience of the subject discussed in the text.	2. Careful intellectual preparation of the lesson. Introduce available graphic and objective aids.
3. Limited intelligence.	3. See remedial measures to number 8 under rate.
4. Short span of attention.	4. See remedial measures to number 1 under rate.
5. Mechanics of reading not yet habituated.	5. Thorough review of phonetics, analysis, synthesis and word recognition. Apply graded series of exercises in silent reading given in this chapter.

SUGGESTED READING

GERMANE and GERMANE, *Silent Reading* (Row, Peterson & Co.).

GRAY, W. S., *Eighteenth Yearbook of National Society for the Study of Education,* Part II (Public School Publishing Co.).

JUDD, C. H., *Reading: Its Nature and Development* (University of Chicago Press).

O'BRIEN, J., *Silent Reading* (Macmillan Co.).

PARKER, S. C., *Types of Elementary Teaching and Learning* (Ginn & Co.), Ch. vi.

SMITH, W. A., *The Reading Process* (Macmillan Co.), Ch. ix.

STONE, R. C., *Silent and Oral Reading* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

THORNDIKE, E. L., "Reading as Reasoning: A Study of Mistakes in Paragraph Reading," *Journal of Educational Psychology,* Vol. 8, June, 1917.

WHEAT, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Chs. ix-xvi.

CHAPTER XII

GROUPING ACCORDING TO WEAKNESSES IN READING

Upper grade teachers are inclined to think that there can be no justification for a poor reader in their classes. Is not reading ability only a group of related skills or habits, they ask. To be sure, but no one in the earlier grades discovered the specific skill or skills that a particular pupil lacked. This deficiency, permitted to remain, now keeps the whole reading ability on a low plane. Only through the use of a group system in the teaching of reading can class instruction remove the specific reading handicaps of certain pupils.

An Analysis of Reading Errors

In earlier chapters, we noted the outstanding errors in silent and oral reading. A detailed analysis of the causes of these errors is necessary in order to suggest remedial measures.

1. *Insertions.*—This most common error, especially in oral reading, may add material either related or unrelated to the text. The causes may be traced to:

(*a*) Inattention

(*b*) Imagination

(*c*) Apperceptive process. The mind may be set for a particular reaction which is unconsciously introduced into the material before the eyes. This cause was explained and illustrated in the closing pages of the chapter on Oral Reading in the Intermediate Grades.

2. *Substitution.*—An error closely allied to the previous one is the substitution of either inappropriate or appropriate expressions for those on the page. Good readers often make the latter type of substitution. The causes may be:

(*a*) Faulty perception. The mind does not interpret the visual contributions accurately. Therefore *how* is read as *who* and *form* as *farm* or *from*.
(*b*) Malfunction of the apperceptive process. The overactive mind may replace the author's words by those which it regards as superior. Of course, the reader is not always right in this quick judgment.

3. *Repetitions.*—This is the most common first grade error, due, it is believed, either to the child's dissatisfaction with his result or to his difficulty in securing the thought. In either case, the pupil goes back and takes a fresh start. All poor readers show this type of fault. Where it is found in good readers, it illustrates the persistence of an old habit.

4. *Omissions.*—A pupil may omit what is essential or only what is contributory, but not vital, to the thought of the writer. The first kind of omission is frequent in poor readers, the second, in both good and poor readers. Omissions may be produced by

(*a*) Nervousness
(*b*) Fluctuating attention
(*c*) Carelessness
(*d*) Unfamiliarity with the language
(*e*) Apperceptive process. The mind is set for a different idea and therefore omits what is out of harmony with preconceived or desired conclusions.

5. *Mispronunciations.*—Minor mispronunciations are not taken into consideration in this analysis. The gross errors which concern us can be traced to

(*a*) Limited knowledge of the language
(*b*) Faulty auditory perception
(*c*) Speech difficulty or defect
(*d*) Apperceptive process, which expresses itself in a preferred sound. The pupil knows the word *prēfer;* he then reads *preference* as *prēference.*

6. *Wrong Reading Rate* may be due to:

(*a*) Insufficient effort or attention. The pupil may therefore read either too quickly or too slowly.
(*b*) Overcarefulness
(*c*) Short reading span
(*d*) Limitations of language
(*e*) Slow speech at all times
(*f*) Lack of intelligence

These five causes invariably produce reading that is too slow.

(*g*) Characteristics of temperament. These may express themselves in reading that is too fast as well as too slow.

7. *Low Quality of Oral Reading or Vocalization.*—Oral reading may be poor in quality because of the following causes:

(*a*) Bad enunciation
(*b*) Defective articulation
(*c*) Failure to introduce rhythm of speech intended
(*d*) Inability to reproduce the cadence of the language
(*e*) Poor pitch
(*f*) Unpleasant voice quality or lack of voice control
(*g*) Bad speech habits
(*h*) Inability to speak expressively
(*i*) Bad habits contracted in early nonphrased reading

8. *Lack of Comprehension.*—Failure to understand the text was traced to: (*a*) limited knowledge of language; (*b*) unfamiliarity with the subject matter treated; (*c*) poor control of mechanics of reading; (*d*) low intelligence. These factors were set forth in detail with remedial measures in the chapter on silent reading.

Types of Remedial Reading Lessons

The detailed analysis of reading errors must be followed by a study of remedial measures designed to reduce the causing factors. We offer, therefore, a list of remedial reading lessons, all worth while, each effective in its own way, depending upon the need of the pupil or the group.

1. *Lesson to Expand Visual Group.*—Give practice in reading, from flash cards, a series of phrases and short sentences. Be sure to tell the class the object of the exercise and ask for earnest effort because each card is exhibited for approximately a second.

Another useful device is to ask children to read typewritten sheets on which the words are grouped in reading phrases, with a compelling arrow running from left to right, thus:

In the morning poor John came breathlessly into the room
→ → → →

As these exercises progress, the reading phrases become somewhat longer. To illustrate:

In the early morning poor frightened John came
→ → →
almost breathlessly into the dining room.
→ →

Little by little, the pupil acquires a new reading habit which gives him larger units of visual grasp.

2. *Lesson to Increase Speed.*—In earlier discussions a graded series of silent reading exercises was suggested. These exercises should be given, but always with a time limit. As in the preceding lesson, let the children know their reading weakness and the object of the lesson about to be given. Such motivation is undertaken in the hope of enlisting vigorous pupil coöperation.

3. *Lesson to Reduce Errors in Visual Perception.*—Inaccurate visual perception, it was noted, caused many forms of reading errors. Exercises to distinguish words and expressions likely to be confused with one another, should be given to those who are inclined to make this type of error. First present the following words in lists and then in sentences, calling for rapid silent and ready oral reading:

> who, how; when, where; what, that; when, which;
> far, form, from; every, very; even, ever;
> there, their, etc.

> He who knows how to-day very likely knew how yesterday.
> From every farm, they came, etc.

These drills given for three or four minutes daily, gradually develop accuracy of visual verbal perception. Incidentally, they serve as relaxation from more difficult tasks.

4. *Lessons to Insure Mastery of Mechanics.*—Enough has been said about the teaching of phonograms and the analytic-synthetic process, to make further discussion unnecessary. Where children lack the mechanics of reading,

daily systematic instruction in word analysis, phonogram recognition and word building, is an absolute essential.

5. *Lesson to Develop Silent Reading Technique,* and

6. *To Develop Power to Acquire Thought from the Page.*—Where pupils read words, indulge in excessive vocal motor imagery, read very slowly, further reduce their rate by lip movement, they lack the technique of silent reading. These difficulties are fully and adequately treated in the psychology of reading and in the discussion of silent reading. (See Chapters III and XI.)

7. *Lesson to Develop Power of Interpretational Reading.*—Acquisitive reading was differentiated from interpretative reading and a definite series of graded lessons designed to develop ability to select essentials, organize data and evaluate results is suggested on pages 205–207 of the chapter on Silent Reading.

8. *Lesson to Develop Æsthetic Judgment.*—Power to appreciate the text of literary quality is determined by native ability, contact with literature and methods of teaching which stress the artistic rather than the formal phases of language. In the discussion of oral reading and again in the study of literary masterpieces, the teacher will find the technique of lessons for æsthetic appreciation carefully developed.

9. *Lessons to Develop Power of Expression.*—Special attention must be given to those whose oral reading and speech lack life and spontaneity. Here, too, provision has been made. The reader is referred to the discussions of means of improving expression in reading set forth in the chapter on oral reading.

10. *Lessons to Widen the Pupil's Knowledge of the Field of Literature.*—Unless pupils read much outside of

the formal class lessons in reading, they will never become good readers nor will they ever acquire the gift of escaping, through books, from the confining bonds of personal experience. How shall we give the child an ever-increasing knowledge of the literary heritage that awaits him? Specific devices and specialized lessons are given in the discussions of reading to children, silent reading, and extensive reading.

Summary.—The discussion of types of remedial reading lessons has given us nothing new because these were anticipated in the study of the different forms of reading. We have merely summarized and reviewed, reorganized our facts and made a new application of them.

Cases in Reading: Diagnosis and Treatment

Now that we have analyzed the outstanding errors in reading and have summarized general remedial measures, we are ready to consider specific reading cases. Those presented here are not actual individual records, but rather composite records of certain pupil types easily recognized. For the sake of brevity and directness, these cases are set forth in tabular arrangement.

Organization of Special Reading Groups

The first step in planning individualized instruction is to give a diagnostic or selective test. Then children who exhibit the same weaknesses and have therefore the same needs can be grouped together. If the teacher will explain her system to these groups, the remedial exercises she gives to each will thus become thoroughly motivated. Each child should be encouraged to keep a graphic chart of his progress. Instruction thus becomes a coöperative and

DIAGNOSES OF, AND REMEDIAL MEASURES FOR, VARIOUS TYPES OF READERS

The Case	Its Characteristics	Diagnosis	Remedial Measures
CASE No. 1. *The Generally Satisfactory Reader.*	1. Efficient in both oral and silent reading. 2. Long perceptual span. 3. Vocal movements correct in oral reading and under control in silent reading. 4. Quality of oral reading good. 5. Rate in oral and silent reading satisfactory. 6. Knowledge of language ample. 7. Comprehension excellent. 8. General intelligence usually above normal.	The defects usually found in this case are minor and, in the main, negligible. They can be traced to early habits or personal idiosyncrasies.	Encourage such children to read much and direct them to good books. Study their interests and needs and then recommend reading in harmony with these. Consult professional librarian for reading list. Do not neglect this type of pupil who has already acquired an effective instrument that contributes to growth.
CASE No. 2. *The Satisfactory Reader Who Is Slow.*	1. Comprehension good in silent reading if ample time is allowed. 2. Quality of oral reading good.	1. Outstanding fault is the excessive time consumed in reading. This means, frequently less intelligent reading. 2. Reads by words and not larger thought units. 3. Pauses too long, eye sweeps too numerous and too small, and usually shows regressive movements.	1. Give exercises in phrase drills as described in Remedial Lesson No. 1. 2. Ask children to find certain phrases in a given paragraph. 3. Ask children to use each of the exposed phrases in a sentence. Expose phrases on flash cards. Quicken speed. 4. Stress silent reading in time limit with simple text. 5. Discourage lip movement and vocalization.

			6. Discourage traditional attitude, "slow but sure." Let children know reasons for desiring greater speed. 7. Let each pupil keep personal record of improvement. Graphic records best. These are suggested on page 226.
CASE NO. 3. *The Poor Reader Whose Rate Is Excessively Rapid*	1. Technique in reading seems satisfactory. 2. Comprehension is decidedly below the norm of the class. 3. The rate is overrapid.	1. The excessive speed seems to be caused by temperamental qualities. 2. The pupil is indifferent to results and satisfied with the process. 3. Usually eye movements are too long, pauses too short and too few for recognition to take place. 4. Child needs a new attitude toward reading and new reading habits.	1. Retard rate in oral reading by devices suggested in the discussion of how to improve articulation caused by excessive speed in speech; page 155. 2. Let pupil know his outstanding weakness. 3. Encourage pupil to stop at end of a few sentences or a short paragraph for a review of the content. 4. Give a specific question to be answered or a problem to be solved by the information in the text. With this purpose in mind, let the pupil read. As the new type of reading develops, *i.e.* the reading for thought, new coördinations, new visual spans and new eye movements and pauses are acquired.

DIAGNOSES OF, AND REMEDIAL MEASURES FOR, VARIOUS TYPES OF READERS—*Continued*

The Case	Its Characteristics	Diagnosis	Remedial Measures
CASE No. 4. *The Pupil Who Is Good in Silent Reading but Poor in Oral Reading* (not really a serious case).	1. Thought in silent reading is readily obtained. 2. Thought is obtained with difficulty from oral reading. 3. Expression in oral reading poor because of difficulty in obtaining the thought. 4. Phonic qualities may be either good or poor. 5. Many repetitions and substitutions in oral reading.	1. Pupil has had inadequate oral reading in the past. 2. There may be temperamental weakness, nervousness, overself consciousness. 3. May have either speech defect or dialect error.	1. Insure preparatory silent reading before the oral. 2. Practice in oral reading will gradually overcome this weakness. 3. If there is a speech defect, every effort must be made to correct it. Such a pupil possesses ability in the important form of reading, silent reading, and will probably not be handicapped by this weakness in oral reading.
CASE No. 5. *The Pupil Who Is Good in Oral Reading but Poor in Silent Reading* (a serious weakness is here revealed).	1. Shows much lip movement. 2. Unusually slow in silent reading. 3. Does not obtain the thought.	1. Shows as many sweeps and pauses in silent reading as in oral. 2. The pupil is a slave to auditory and vocal imagery.	1. Let pupil know his weakness. 2. Give the graded exercises designed to develop technique of silent reading and diminish the dependence on auditory and vocal motor imagery. See pages 194 to 202.
CASE No. 6. *The Pupil of the Third Year Who Seems Weak in Most Phases of Reading.*	The child is normal in intelligence, active and responsive but is decidedly weak in reading and in spelling. In other subjects he maintains the grade standard.	This pupil has evidently lost the foundation work in reading and it was never made up to him.	The usual drill in word recognition, phonograms, silent reading of phrases and sentences, the process of oral and silent reading. Unless special provision is made for this pupil, his reading disability will continue.

highly socialized affair and not the sole concern of the teacher.

1. *A Plan of Grouping.*—The number of groups, obviously, must be kept small—three or four—because in class teaching, instruction can become, at best, relatively, not absolutely, individualized. Experience has shown that the following grouping is practical and helpful:

Group 1: Pupils whose rate in silent reading is unsatisfactory.
Group 2: Pupils who do not comprehend what they read silently.
Group 3: Pupils whose oral reading lacks quality.
Group 4: Pupils who are weak in the mechanics of reading.

The preceding tabulation makes provision for each group of pupils. Our immediate task is therefore to evolve a simple plan readily administered by the teacher, by which children can be so grouped.

The Silent Reading Test

Any of the standardized silent reading tests will give a reasonably accurate measure of a pupil's rate and comprehension in silent reading. Each test gives a definite set of norms for each grade. Thus the Bolenius' *Teachers' Manual of Oral and Silent Reading* offers the following grade norms in silent reading.[1]

Grade	Rate, Words per Minute	Content
IV.....	160	Half of the ideas in a 400-word passage
V.....	180	
VI.....	220	
VII.....	250	
VIII.....	280	

[1] E. M. Bolenius, *Teachers' Manual of Oral and Silent Reading.*

Children in the sixth grade should be able to read 220 words per minute of sixth grade text and should obtain half of the total number of ideas in a selection containing about 400 words.

Oral Reading Test

Wheat[2] suggests that each pupil be asked to read, privately to his teacher, one paragraph from a reader used two years previous, a second paragraph from a reader of the previous grade and a third paragraph from the current grade reader. A standardized oral reading test will serve the same purpose. The teacher should note first the rate of the reading and second the type of error, that is, undue omissions, substitutions, mispronunciations, failure to recognize words or inability to attack new words.

The Pupil Record of the Diagnostic Test

A simple record that is helpful is the following:

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS OF DIAGNOSTIC TESTS IN READING. CLASS—

The Pupils	I. Q.	*Silent Reading*		*Oral Reading*		Recommendations
		Rate	Comprehension	Rate	Type of Error	
1. Clara H——	122	110%	100%	+	Articulation poor; omissions numerous	Practice slow reading.
2. Walter M——	100	75%	90%	Sat.	Expression poor; fails to recognize words	More home reading; drill on phonograms.

[2] H. G. Wheat, *The Teaching of Reading*, p. 333.

The intelligence quotient (I.Q.) is interesting and by itself is not to be regarded as an absolute measure of ability. Rate in silent reading for this grade is set by the test used at 160 words per minute. The first pupil read 175 words or 10 per cent more in the allotted time than the norm. So, too, comprehension is recorded in percentage form and shows that Pupil No. 1 does normal fourth-grade work while Pupil 2 is 10 per cent below normal in comprehension and 25 per cent below the grade standard of speed. Oral reading has two divisions: (*a*) rate, and (*b*) type of error. Rate is recorded by *sat* if *satisfactory;* by + if too rapid; by — if too slow; + + or — — would indicate excessive speed or undue slowness, respectively. The remainder of the table is self-explanatory.

Remedial Drills

In addition to specialized work that must be provided for each group, children should be given individual directions for improvement. The child whose oral reading is too rapid can reduce his rate by practicing at home. So, too, phonograms can be learned and words can be built in the free time of pupils. Much can be done for certain pupils under the supervision of parents and older pupils. Those children whose records are satisfactory should be encouraged to read by themselves and to give aid to weaker pupils.

Individual Records of Progress

We have repeatedly advised that children be kept informed of their weakness and the significance of remedial drills. They should know the grade norms and their last score. Much interest is aroused in personal progress by

teaching children to keep a graphic record of their progress (Fig. 3). These records stir pride in achievement and either give encouragement or lead to a determination to exert greater effort to succeed. Pupil No. 1 shows a steady gain every four weeks; Pupil No. 2 made no gain for 12 weeks but then improvement became noticeable; Pupil No. 3, above grade norm, shows growth, due probably less to special effort and more to increasing maturity. Each chart

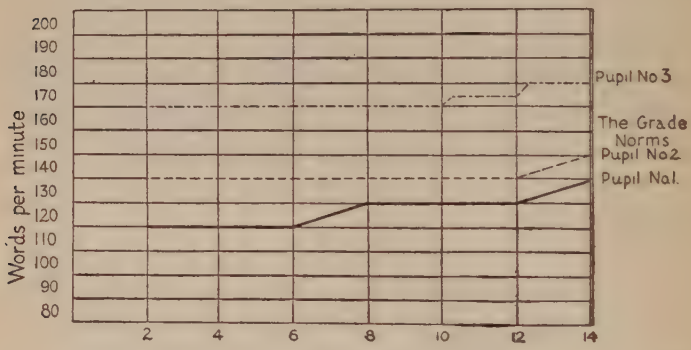

FIG. 3

should show not three pupil records but only one. Three graphs are here shown on one chart merely for the sake of economy of space.

SUGGESTED READING

GERMANE and GERMANE, *Silent Reading* (Row, Peterson & Co.), Chs. vii-ix, xvi.

GRAY, C. T., *Deficiencies in Reading Ability* (D. C. Heath & Co.).

GRAY, U. S., *Remedial Cases in Reading: Their Diagnosis and Treatment* (University of Chicago Press).

JUDD, C. H., *Reading: Its Nature and Development* (University of Chicago Press), Ch. v.

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR STUDY OF EDUCATION, *Twentieth Year Book*, Part II (Public School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Ill.).

O'BRIEN, J. A., *Silent Reading* (Macmillan Co.), Chs. iv-vi.

PAULU, E. M., *Diagnostic Testing and Remedial Teaching* (D. C. Heath & Co.), Ch. ix.

STONE, C. R., *Silent and Oral Reading* (Houghton Mifflin Co.), Chs. viii-x.

TRABUE, M. R., *Measuring Results in Education* (American Book Co.), Ch. xv.

WHEAT, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Ch. xvii.

CHAPTER XIII

THE TEACHING OF A MASTERPIECE

READING IN THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Is Literature a Prehigh School Subject?

For a long time the school was conceived as a formal institution, with a very formal subject-matter and a still more formal method. Its sole function was to give the symbols of knowledge. The mechanics of reading and the ability to attack a new combination of old letters marked the limits of reading in the elementary school. The cultural aspects of the elementary subjects were deemed far beyond the immature intellectual powers of the child. Hence literature, the art or cultural aspect of reading, was accorded no place in the curriculum because its appreciation presupposed too great a stock of mental powers.

The busy teacher often forgets that the child comes to her with feelings, interests, and impulses, which are well ingrained and part of childhood, if not childhood itself. These inherent desires and capacities, when properly aroused and directed, become the basis for literary appreciation. The inherent characteristics of literature are such as appeal to this native stock of childhood interests. What are these natural cravings of children that make possible the appreciation of literature? Children bring to literature:

1. A desire for a wider world, a yearning for experi-

ences outside of the realm of the immediate environment in which they live.

2. A craving for the joy which comes from using one's imagination. The highly imaginative child loves to be transported into the realm of nowhere, where the fairies reign and the sprites defy natural laws.

3. A love for the beautiful. The child's æsthetic sense, however crude, shows unmistakable preference for the artistic. Children are attracted by pictures, beautiful color and harmonious sounds. They strive for the beautiful in their designs; they give evidence of a sense of rhythm in their concert recitations and songs. While their æsthetic standards need development and refinement, they nevertheless bespeak a craving which literature can satisfy.

4. A strong tendency toward hero-worship. Every child yearns for some hero in whom he can pin his faith. While he is too young to understand the elements of character, he nevertheless sees them concrete in his heroes. The child has a sense of moral values. He knows what is good and what is bad, what to censure and what to praise in human conduct although he cannot become articulate about moral qualities. Literature, surely, is capable of satisfying this yearning for the hero.

5. A love for the story. The child's passion for the story is too well known to need more than passing mention; "once upon a time" is music to his ear.

6. A desire to express his impulses. The child finds a keen joy in telling as well as listening, in expressing what he feels most and loves best. Children love to engage in dramatics.

The child brings this stock of native cravings to his literary study. Literature can satisfy these, for it is itself

the product of these very emotions and yearnings of the race.

The initial question, "Can literature be taught in the school?" is hence answered. But if by teaching literature we mean giving a thorough intellectual comprehension of the subject-matter, then the answer must be a decided negative. If we mean giving an appreciation, then the answer is decidedly affirmative, for appreciation is "caught, not taught." Were children to possess no native interests this appreciation could not be caught. But possessing as they do, this rich basis for literary appreciation, we have only to call forth what already exists. We need only apply the magic touch, and speak the open sesame and the child's potentialities for literary appreciation awaken. The only condition necessary before the open sesame can be uttered is a stirring enthusiasm on the part of the teacher. We cannot teach others to like what we ourselves do not love. We cannot lead others to revere what we ourselves do not worship. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm, but out of passive interest no inspiration springs.

Why Introduce the Study of the Longer Masterpieces?

Limitations of Literary Readers for the Junior High School.—The introduction of the masterpieces is of recent date. A short time ago the school readers with their varied literary diet were eliminated from the last years of the school course. The reasons that led to this change show clearly that teachers are alive to the limitations of the school readers.

1. The old readers were "scrappy." They gave snatches of everything and therefore there was lack of unity, of purpose, and of organization.

2. They gave no lasting impression. How many selections we read in the ten or twelve readers that we used throughout our own school course! Yet how vague are our recollections of these stories, incidents, characters and pictures. As we recall a masterpiece that we have read carefully by ourselves or studied in class, what a delightful contrast is there in results! How vivid is the panorama of scenes and incidents that flits before us even after this long lapse of time! Characters are still real and dramatic situations are still pregnant with tragic elements.

3. The old readers catered to the fickle interest of the child. A child's round of desires is ever-changing. His joy in a new toy is short-lived. These old readers pandered to the temporary and evanescent interests of the child and thus tended to encourage an attitude which weakens intellect and character.

The Service Rendered by School Readers.—But we must not forget that in the earlier grades these readers serve a useful purpose. They have important functions which they serve well. In earlier years it is necessary to teach the mechanics of reading and give practice in symbol interpretation in order to pave the way for the literary work which should cap the school course in reading. This these readers accomplish. Because of the child's limited ability and experience in reading, a graded course is necessary; this, too, such readers give. And, lastly, there are a number of shorter literary gems that the child should carry with him. These are given in the traditional readers.

The Shorter Selections Not to Be Neglected

But because in the upper grades, school readers, too often, give an "old, stale, sterile, lean" and lifeless literary

diet, they have been supplanted by a sustained study of the simpler masterpieces. It is, however, not necessary to go to the other extreme. The school course must give the child a knowledge and an appreciation of the shorter gems of the languages. If a seventh-year class studies *Evangeline* it should not fail to take, in the same term, a number of short selections of the type of "The Chambered Nautilus," "The Concord Hymn," "The Charge of the Light Brigade," "Recessional," "To a Skylark," "What Is So Rare as a Day in June?" "Abou Ben Adhem," "Work."

Extensive Reading Must Be Continued

It is a serious error to discontinue rapid reading for story or information merely because there is now introduced the careful study of traditional masterpieces. Rapid reading, much reading, reading to widen one's acquaintance with books and writers—these must ever be stimulated by the devices set down in the discussions of silent reading and extensive reading.

Contemporary Literature Should Be Represented

Nor is it wise to limit the study of literature to the writers of the past. Much that is found in the literature of to-day is as artistic in conception and as genuine in its execution as some of the old. Galsworthy's *Justice,* Jack London's *Call of the Wild* or *Martin Eden,* Mary Antin's *Promised Land,* Van Dyke's *Ruling Passions* or *Fisherman's Luck* and Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy* are only a few of the many masterpieces that may well be substituted for some of the older books that are invariably studied in school.

Values of the Masterpiece

But aside from the negative function of counteracting the limitations of the old readers, what are the specific values of the masterpiece? We must stop for a discussion of these values because they determine the aims of instruction and the organization of methods of teaching. The manifold values of the masterpieces may be grouped under four heads.

1. *The Practical Value.*—(*a*) A study of the masterpieces introduces the child to the best that we have to offer in our literary possession.

(*b*) The masterpiece gives the child a rich fund of knowledge of people, incidents, motives—in a word, of life; it supplements the child's past acquisition by adding interesting side-lights on the child's own experience. To quote, "It gives us an inventory of the heritage of the knowledge of humanity."

(*c*) The masterpiece humanizes the child, by giving him a picture of all of man's relations in society, his relation in the family, among his friends, in peace, in war, in civic and social life and in religion. Every phase of life is brought within the ken of the child for his immediate scrutiny.

2. *The Study Value.*—(*a*) The long masterpiece develops the power for sustained interest. Its content grips the child and works a remarkable change in his power of attention. His ever-changing interests are arrested by a sustained story that has one series of incidents and one set of characters. Each succeeding term's work brings greater facility in sustaining attention, and directing effort toward the same end.

(*b*) The study of the masterpiece gives a unity of im-

pression, which results in a lasting effect. This is due primarily to the fact that the masterpiece gives a consistent and a cumulative impression. An author's power is always lost in the isolated selections found in readers. The force and the virility of Webster's Bunker Hill Oration are dissipated in the excerpts used for readers. How monstrous is Shylock, if we read only certain selections! Yet how different is our estimate of his actions when we see them in their proper setting in the play. How abusive is King Lear as we read of him in extracts! Yet how willing are we to forgive his vituperations as the whole situation is shown in the play! The impressions that selections and extracts give are misleading, temporary, and even erroneous. The impressions of the whole masterpiece are reliable and permanent, for there are unity and completeness of view that make for verisimilitude.

3. *The Intellectual Value.*—(*a*) Creative imagination is trained. The imagination of the young child is not only active, but riotous and fantastical; it is the imagination which by a wave of the wand turns the hovel into a glittering palace of gold and crystal. But the imagination which education must develop is the more mature imagination which creates the possible. This is the imagination which brings forth new inventions, practical reforms, and visions of improved social life. Literature can train the constructive imagination through its verbal pictures, its portrayals of all situations.

There are many ways in which we can take advantage of the possibilities here offered for training the imagination. The simplest method is to encourage the child to give a pictorial or diagrammatic representation of the action or the picture contained in the text. Actual motor ex-

pression of the content is a second method of training imagination. When the child reads, "And Rip trudged along wearily, with his gun on his shoulder," the natural tendency is to pass over the picture. Make the child "trudge along wearily" in imitation of Rip. Now the child "sees" the picture, otherwise, he could never dramatize the action. This mental imaging of the author's picture trains the imagination in the educational sense. Another and still simpler method for directing the imagination is by verbal description. Ask the child to visualize the picture and describe the component elements and the characteristic details. The child thus again helps the mind's power to picture the real and the possible. Training the imagination does not mean, therefore, stimulating an oversensitive and ultra active power for rich imagery but rather directing it to create the possible and the probable.

(*b*) The masterpiece affords opportunities for the exercise of reason and judgment in practical and worldly relations. Throughout the masterpiece the child is asked to discover the meaning of passages, to interpret statements, to judge motives, to estimate character. Thought in literature differs from the formal reasoning of verbal or quantitative relationships in grammar or arithmetic, but closely approximates the practical reasoning which confronts us daily in life. How to bring out the thought value of literature will be considered in the discussion of the method of teaching the masterpiece.

4. *The Character Value.*—To many teachers of English the ethical value of the masterpiece is its ultimate justification. When this type of literary study is introduced, the child is at the threshold of the period of puberty. The

changes in the physical, intellectual, and emotional life of the child bring an awakening maturity in outlook, in desires and tastes. It is a period when ideals are selected and conduct is beset with conflicting impulses; it is a period of maturing thought. The moralities heretofore taught on the basis of parental authority are now questioned. This truly is the period of *Sturm und Drang,* when moral guidance and inspiration are especially necessary.

Matthew Arnold tells us that there are two elements in human nature that crave especially for literature; these are a sense of the beautiful and a sense of conduct. Literature is as well fitted to answer the second as the first appeal for many reasons:

(*a*) It makes concrete and personal ethical principles that are abstract and impersonal. In literature unselfish devotion is not an abstraction. Evangeline is a living embodiment of this virtue. Patriotism and altruism are taken out of the realm of unattainable virtues and made tangible and attainable in the living character of Brutus. We have here then a crystallization of the ideals of humanity.

(*b*) The literary masterpiece so presents characters that it wins the child's love for the good and its disapproval of the wrong. It seems to appeal to an elemental sense of justice inherent in childhood.

(*c*) It supplies "The Expulsive Power of Higher Emotions." Our psychology tells us that no two conflicting emotions can control the mind for any time. Either one or the other obtains the mastery and thus has the upper hand. Awaken a noble desire or feeling and a baser one immediately dies. Pity will at once banish hate, con-

fidence at once expels fear, admiration kills treachery. Ethical training would be impossible if we had to eradicate the baser nature before implanting nobler ideals. The mere fact that the presence of a lofty ideal in the mind at once precludes the existence of a meaner motive of conduct, makes ethical training possible through the inculcation of positive ideals. Literature fills the mind with the loftier sentiments and thus gives them an expulsive power over the lower ones.

(*d*) The emotional appeal guarantees action. A formal ethical lesson without an appeal to the emotions is usually not effective. It appeals to the intellect, and brings conviction, but not action. The ultimate endeavor of ethical teaching is to influence action and change conduct. This can be achieved only as we appeal to emotions, the springs to action. The appeal of literature is intensely emotional.

(*e*) It creates a love for reading. The masterpiece is important as a character influence, because of the permanent habits it tends to develop. Taught properly, it inculcates a desire to read, a love for the better forms of literature, and thus gives the child a permanent source of inspiration, a lifelong medium of wholesome recreation.

Conclusion.—The influence of literature is hence keen and positive, bringing an ever ready response in its appeal to the heart, for the *Proverbs* tell us "As in the water, face answereth face, so the heart of man, to man." Whitman strikes the same note when he assures us,

Surely, whoever speaks to me in the right voice, him or her
shall I follow,
As the water follows the moon, silently, with fluid steps,
anywhere around the globe.

Teaching the Masterpiece

Now that we have seen the objects that are to be attained in the study of literary masterpieces, we must turn to a consideration of the method of teaching them. Common procedure requires three readings; first, for the story, second, for intensive study, and, third, for increased appreciation and unity of impression. The following discussion indicates the method of conducting these three readings in the interest of keener and more appreciative literary study.

The Preparation for the Study of the Masterpiece

The Intellectual Preparation

1. *The Fact Background.*—It is obvious that the children need a background of facts of time, place, customs, and contemporary life in order to understand the action of *Julius Cæsar,* of *Evangeline,* or of the *Lady of the Lake.* This background of fact must be given. But it is dangerous to seize upon this opportunity to correlate and give an extensive geography or history lesson. Detailed map work, research in history and the like are here out of place. Correlation aims to unify subjects in order to enrich a central idea. We are not engaged in enriching the child's knowledge of geography or history, but in developing appreciation. The facts of geography are intellectual. *The Lady of the Lake* is an embodiment of the sentiment of Scotch highland life. The facts of history are social. *Evangeline* is an emotional presentation, not a historic exposition. It is always unwise to warn the child that the true facts of geography or history are distorted in the literary work that they study. Shakespeare portrays *his* Cæsar; the teacher's object must be to lead the children to

feel the reality of Shakespeare's characterization. Introduce the real Cæsar and the literary picture falls at once. The teacher need not be concerned about the discrepancies between Longfellow's Acadia and the real Acadia. Longfellow refused to visit the place after he wrote his description. We must not destroy the picture that the poet cherished. In his *Evangeline* Longfellow did not write of the geography of Acadia, but rather of the "beauty and strength of woman's devotion."

2. *Author's Life.*—A knowledge of the main currents of the author's life is necessary for a thorough appreciation of the masterpiece, which is an expression of his power and personality. It is also useful information. The author should be more than a mere name. But when shall we study him? Not before the first reading! The reasons are many.

(*a*) There is no motive in such a study. The child does not understand why, of all the books that he receives at the beginning of a term, the author of one of these should be dignified more than the others. He does not study the life of the author of his book on grammar or arithmetic. Why single out Shakespeare or Longfellow? But if the teacher insists, the child will study the facts that are given him or those that he copies from the encyclopedia. But it is an arbitrary and dispirited task. Every biography studied must be a source of inspiration. If, however, we wait until the story is read and the children are thrilled by it, each pupil feels an urgency to know the writer more intimately.

(*b*) A writer's life is usually not an interesting one for the child because it is a life of appreciation, of artistic ideals and their expression. The child's hero is a man of

action, whose achievements are fraught with adventure. In these biographical studies we must omit all details of genealogy, all analysis of style, and any discussion of the author's relation to his time. This information is without the pale of the child's interests and comprehension. Aside from the details of the author's life we must emphasize the essentials of character that are revealed in his masterpiece. Take up Longfellow's religious fervor, his love for the types of simple honest manhood and womanhood depicted in *Evangeline*. Every page reflects these. Bring out Whittier's love for the poor and the downtrodden. It is perhaps best to begin this study with the question, "What kind of man would write *Evangeline*?" Let the children suggest probable traits of character and personality and then verify these. The aim throughout should be to make the name of the author synonymous with a few ruling passions so that the child may carry away a definite, permanent and sympathetic impression.

3. *The Emotional Background: Why Necessary?*—The discussion thus far has sought to emphasize that the appreciation of the masterpiece must be emotional, not intellectual. It is necessary, therefore, to make the children emotionally receptive for the author's appeal. Frequently the poet does this himself in his prelude. "This is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlocks," strikes at once the minor strain of *Evangeline*. In the overture the musician makes this same attempt to prepare his auditors emotionally. How can we make our children emotionally receptive for the message of the literary masterpiece? Two suggestions follow:

(*a*) *Through pictures.* Procure as many pictures as possible, whose themes are taken from the masterpiece;

pictures representing scenery, incident and characters. These are hung about the room, and nothing is said in explanation, until the intensive study brings the class to the incidents in the pictures. But in the meantime, the children are encouraged to look at these and get what they can out of them. Nothing very definite is gained, but they serve to arouse necessary sentiments and create a sympathetic atmosphere.

(*b*) *Foreshadow the probabilities of the story.* A second and more positive method of arousing the proper emotional background is to foreshadow the nature and the probable trend of the story which is to be studied. This can best be done by stimulating the child's imaginative powers in the desired direction, rather than by a direct statement. Thus, after the preliminary historical setting had been given for *Evangeline,* and the children had been told of the order to banish these simple souls from Acadia and scatter them over the continent, the teacher asked, "What tragedies might occur in carrying out such an order?" Children in a seventh-year class suggested, "A hard-working farmer would lose all his possessions," another, "People would be homeless and penniless," another, "Families would be broken up," still another, "Father and mother, parents and children would be separated," etc. The teacher then announced, "Let us turn to the tragedy Longfellow pictures." The necessary sentiments of pity and sympathy were aroused; every child was emotionally conditioned for the story that the "murmuring pines" and the "disconsolate waves" had to tell. So, too, with *Julius Cæsar.* The teacher told the facts of the democratic government in Rome, of Cæsar's rapid rise, of Pompey's end, and then asked, "Why would a man in Cæsar's position

have enemies?" The answers were many and varied. The teacher then continued, "What would you naturally expect these enemies to do?" The obvious answer, "Fall to plotting," was readily elicited. "Let us begin therefore the great plot against Cæsar." With this initial preparation the children's minds were prepared to look behind motives, to watch for the tale which had been foreshadowed.

The First Reading

How to Be Given

The term, first reading, is often construed literally by teachers and becomes a reading for the story only. It is not unusual to find teachers and children alternately reading the masterpiece, omitting all comments and centering interest exclusively on the narrative. This first reading does not achieve the desired results for many reasons. First, some parts are too difficult to convey any meaning to the children. Secondly, certain portions that are purely descriptive or that serve to give local color seem devoid of interest to the pupils. Thirdly, this long reading, unrelieved by comment, brings with it a lifelessness and a listlessness that produce a wrong attitude toward the masterpiece.

The term, first reading, must be construed liberally to mean, "Give the story in a most vivid and spirited manner for the purpose of arousing maximum enthusiasm in the term's work." The actual mode of conducting this first reading varies, therefore, with each masterpiece that is taught.

(*a*) In *The Lady of the Lake* the average eighth or

ninth year pupil finds the language difficult, the background altogether new, the style involved, and the action not at all times clear. It is evident that the children cannot get the story from a mere reading by the teacher. It is advisable, therefore, to tell the story in the most vivid and interesting manner without having recourse to the masterpiece itself.

(*b*) In *Julius Cæsar* the conditions are different; the language is simpler, the story is full of action, and the dialogue makes for readier comprehension. The method of conducting the first reading in this case is the direct opposite to that in *The Lady of the Lake.* After the teacher decides what scenes can readily be omitted as not being vital to the story she should read the rest of the play to the children. Since most children lack the fluency and the expressiveness necessary for proper oral rendition, the teacher must bear the full burden of this reading, realizing that effective work here develops in each child a proper attitude toward the study of the coming term.

(*c*) In *Evangeline* both sets of conditions prevail, namely, some parts are suited for oral reading as in *Julius Cæsar,* while others are too difficult or lack interest, as in *The Lady of the Lake.* Both methods of giving the story must therefore be used in *Evangeline,* alternate reading and telling. The simpler parts of this masterpiece are read, while the more difficult ones are summarized by the teacher; the unity of the story is thus maintained. By a skillful blending of reading and narration the first reading is completed. An illustration which is given on the pages following will make this procedure clear to the teacher.

Original Text	*Teacher Reads*
In the Acadian land, on the shores of the basin of Minas,	In the Acadian land, on the shores of the basin of Minas,
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré	Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward	Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward
Giving the village its name and pasture to flocks without number.	Giving the village its name and pasture to flocks without number.
Dikes that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant	Dikes that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates	Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates
Opened and welcomed the sea to wander o'er the meadows.	Opened and welcomed the sea to wander o'er the meadows.
West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields	West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the northward	[And to the north rose the mountains with their mist-covered peaks]
Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains	
Seafogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic	
Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.	

Original Text	*Teacher Reads*
There in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.	There in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.
Strongly built were their houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock,	Strongly built were their houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock;
Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries. Thatched were their roofs, with dormer windows; and gables projecting Over the casement below protected and shaded the doorway. etc.	[Queer were their roofs, and queerer still their windows.] etc.

The Stopping Places in the First Reading

It is evident that the teacher cannot complete the first reading in a single period. The teacher who construes this first reading to mean, "Giving the story in a manner designed to arouse maximum enthusiasm," must carefully plan the part of the masterpiece that is to be read at each period, for a wise selection of pauses contributes much to the interest in the story. Let us assume that on the first day when this oral reading is given, the teacher, by skillfully alternating reading and telling, covers that part of the story which deals with the village of Acadia, its people and their life, the introduction of the main characters, the signing of the wedding contract between Evangeline and Gabriel, the rumors in the village when a warship appears in the harbor, the conjectures started by the proclamation that all male dwellers in Acadia assemble in the church,

the gathering of the excited villagers in the house of worship, the clanging of the shutting gates, the presence of armed guards and the reading of the royal proclamation, "Ye are banished." The teacher then reads or tells of the confusion which broke out in the church, and of Basil shouting his defiance, "Down with the traitors, we never have sworn them allegiance, . . . Fain he would have said more but the hand of a soldier smote him." The reading is continued, as the children sit in breathless expectation:

In the midst of this tumult of angry contention,
Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician entered;
Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence
All that clamorous throng. And thus he spake to his people;
Deep were his tones and solemn. In accents measured and mournful
Spake he: . . . . .
What is this that ye do, my children? What madness has seized you?
Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and taught you,
Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!
Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and privations?
Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?
This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it
Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?
Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing upon you!
See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness, and holy compassion!

Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, "O Father, forgive them!"
Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,
Let us repeat it now, and say, "O Father, forgive them!"
Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people
Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate outbreak
While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive them!"

The teacher then concludes, "I wonder whether the hearts of the soldiers were touched! Did they carry out the cruel order! We shall see to-morrow!" and the first day's reading is over. We must therefore stop at a dynamic pause which produces an effect similar to the irritating "continued in our next!"

Cautions in the First Reading

A word of caution may be of service in helping to heighten the effect of this first reading.

1. *Be well prepared* to make these shifts from reading to telling. There must be no hesitation, and no searching for simpler verbal equivalents. The book must be well marked so that the whole period moves along smoothly.

2. *Do not allow the children to follow in their books.* It will confuse them as the teacher constantly modifies the text. Let them learn to listen intelligently and get the maximum pleasure out of the period.

3. *Do not allow the children to take their books home* until the first reading is completed. The interest in the story which the teacher aroused makes them anxious to read ahead. But in their own reading they meet those

difficulties which the teacher is removing temporarily, and they experience a sense of disappointment. In the intensive study of the masterpiece they will be given plenty of opportunity to do their independent reading.

"Why not merely tell the story?" the teacher may ask. The aim is, not only to give the outline of the story, but to give the atmosphere, the dominant sentiment, the music of the whole masterpiece. Merely to tell the story gives a cold-blooded recital of a narrative. To tell the story with the maximum original setting gives the spirit and the mood in which the masterpiece was conceived.

The Second Reading: The Study of the Masterpiece

Divide the Masterpiece into Intensive and Extensive Reading Selections

It is evident that the entire masterpiece cannot be taken up for intensive study. The teacher must therefore divide the entire reading matter into selections to be used for extensive or for intensive reading. Such parts as are particularly well adapted for class study and well designed to develop literary appreciation must be treated intensively. But other parts that are either very simple or that lack ability to maintain an intense interest in young people must be read quickly and extensively merely to preserve the unity of the masterpiece and afford an opportunity for practice in oral reading. Intensive reading means material chewed and digested; extensive reading is only a process of touch and go. To sum up: dividing the masterpiece into selections for intensive and extensive reading will give opportunities (1) for literary study, (2) for practice in reading, (3) for preserving the

unity of the whole selection, and (4) for maintaining interest throughout the study.

Assign for Study Such Parts as Will Be Read Intensively

The selections that are to be used for intensive reading in the class should be assigned for independent study either at home or during school study periods. Children in the latter part of the school course must learn to use their dictionaries, and to acquire the meaning of such expressions and allusions as are given in the footnotes or glossaries. Time and effort are thus saved and the teacher can emphasize the literary rather than the formal aspect of the text. Since the ideal in all teaching is to make the child independent of the teacher, this book work by the child is highly justifiable.

Will the Home Reading Kill Interest in Class Reading?—Many teachers fail to assign home reading because they fear that they may jeopardize the interest in class work. It should be remembered that children, however intelligent, cannot find for themselves the beauty of language and imagery, the character delineation, the art of narration, all the qualities that raise the masterpiece to the level of a work of art. Only the teacher who can show the pupils no more than they can see for themselves need have misgivings about interest in class reading following home preparation.

What Shall We Select for Intensive Reading?

The spirit of the literary period will be determined by the nature of the selections used for intensive study. With this end in view, the following standards are offered to guide in the selection of a text for intensive reading:

1. *Is It Vital to the Masterpiece?*—What is of minor importance should be omitted in intensive work.

2. *Is It Complete in Itself?*—It must be an incident, a description, an exposition, a scene, that is, a literary or composition unit. Thus, in *Evangeline* the church scene, or the description of the village, or the marriage contract would constitute such a unit for intensive reading. The assignment by pages or lines as is customary in Latin recitations must not be duplicated in the teachings of English.

3. *Can It Be Used to Teach One Simple Principle of Literary Appreciation?*—Each part that is selected for intensive study should, as far as possible, try to bring out one central theme or principle in literary study. For example, the aim of one selection may be to teach *character interpretation.* Throughout the lesson the art of character portrayal is made focal. The child is shown that he can analyze the character of any person in the story by his actions, by his statements and by what others say of him. Thus in the tent scene and in the quarrel scene in *Julius Cæsar* the child is led to study Brutus's character through his acts of consideration manifested toward Lucius and through his protests against the dubious methods of Cassius. Each act and each statement of Brutus is made to cast some light on his personality. The scene which portrays the Acadians huddled in miserable groups on the shore, on the eve of their banishment, offers rich material for a character study of Evangeline. The child notes Evangeline's every action, hears her words of cheer and comfort to others in the face of her own impending tragedy, and listens to what the grief-stricken say about her. At the end of the study of this scene Evangeline looms up a liv-

ing incarnation of Christian forbearance and unselfish devotion to others. Concentrating on one point, namely, "means of interpreting character," gives the children a method which they can apply in their own reading; it opens their eyes and enables them to "see character" that they would otherwise overlook.

In the same way a selection may be used, because it is an excellent model of description. Throughout the intensive reading all attention is focused on how the picture is developed, and how the author uses color words and characteristic details to convey a vivid impression of the scene in his mind's eye. Here the child carries away a standard which enables him to appreciate a description in his own later reading.

For similar reasons, a part of the masterpiece may be selected, because it teaches the structure of skillful narration or because it is rich in diction. In the latter case, the governing aim is to impress upon the pupils' minds the charm of a happy choice of words. By way of illustration we may offer the scene in which the conspirators are planning to murder Cæsar, and Brutus pleads:

> "Let us be sacrificers but not butchers—
> Let us kill him boldly but not wrathfully,
> Let us carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
> Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds——"

Or when Evangeline decides to give up her will-o'-the-wisp search, and lead a useful life as a nun, helping the distressed and the sick, Longfellow paints beautifully the scene which begins, "As when the mist from the mountain tops, . . ." When such selections are chosen for intensive reading, the beauty, the force, the elegance, the richness

and suggestiveness of diction are made central to the exclusion of everything else.

There are compelling advantages in organizing intensive readings around one principle of literary appreciation: (1) The child is given a means of judging such elements when they recur in later readings. (2) A deeper and more lasting impression is almost inevitable. (3) It enables the teacher to assign home work around a specific problem. Thus the teacher assigns: "Read Scene I of Act I and see if you can tell why it is necessary to the story," or "Read Scene II of Act I and see if you can find a suggestion as to the ending of the story," or "By what two devices does the author portray character A?" Such an assignment encourages concentration, and indicates to the child along what lines to think in order to reach the heart of the problem.

Aims in Intensive Reading

During the course of the oral reading teachers must seek to subordinate minor aims to higher literary values. Hence, as children are called upon successively to read the text, we must strive to attain a threefold aim: 1. *Thought.*—Throughout the lesson every question and every suggestion must be such as to demand maximum thought and keen discrimination on the part of the pupils. 2. *Expression.*—The oral rendition must give evidence that the children have grasped the thought and respond to the dominant emotional appeal. 3. *Appreciation.*—Not only must the child understand the thought and feel the situation, but there must result a dynamic interest in what is read so that the text becomes a source of keen pleasure to which he looks forward with eager anticipation.

How to Attain Thought, Expression and Appreciation in Reading

An illustration may serve to make clear the meaning of these three aims in reading and to indicate the modes of attaining them. The selection read by an eighth-year pupil was the opening of Act II, Scene I, of *Julius Cæsar.*

ROME: BRUTUS'S ORCHARD

[*Enter* BRUTUS.]

BRUTUS.

What, Lucius! ho!—
I cannot, by the progress of the stars,
Give guess how near to day.—Lucius, I say!—
I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly.—
When, Lucius, when! Awake, I say! What, Lucius!

If the reader will render these five lines in a uniform loud and commanding voice he will have a fair reproduction of the child's reading, which was accepted by the teacher. Had the lesson developed along the following lines, the three dominant aims would have been attained:

TEACHER: Does Brutus think that Lucius is asleep?
PUPIL: Yes.
TEACHER: Would Brutus ask a sleeping person for the time?
PUPIL: No! Brutus must have thought that Lucius was awake.
TEACHER: You read the first sentence in a tone loud enough to wake Lucius. How do you think Brutus would have spoken it?
PUPIL: In an ordinary inquiring tone. (Pupil now re-reads these lines.)
TEACHER: What answer did Lucius give?
PUPIL: None.

TEACHER: How can you tell?
PUPIL: Brutus repeats "Lucius, I say!"
TEACHER: How would you read these three words?
PUPIL: With a little impatience. (Pupil reads them thus.)
TEACHER: What does Brutus evidently now discover?
PUPIL: That Lucius is asleep.
TEACHER: How can you tell?
PUPIL: Brutus says, "I would it were my fault to sleep so soundly."
TEACHER: To whom does he say this?
PUPIL: To himself.
TEACHER: What error did you make in reading this line?
PUPIL: I read it in a loud tone as if it were meant for Lucius. (Pupil re-reads this line in the tones of a soliloquy.)
TEACHER: But Brutus must know the time. What will he do?
PUPIL: He will wake Lucius.
TEACHER: Read the last line so that you will surely wake Lucius!

The pupil should next be asked to re-read the entire passage and give evidence through changing expression that the changing thought, hidden before, is now clear, and that there is a real appreciation of text that seemed flat and insipid.

Aids and Suggestions for Specific Difficulties

1. *The Nature of the Predominating Questions.*—The method throughout must be one of development, free from long, didactic explanations. The predominating questions must be such as will elicit thought, appreciation, and expression. A lesson in which all the questions ask for meaning of words, identification of names, and for facts in footnotes is unpardonable. Why should a child know all the

words and all the references to local heroes and saints in *The Lady of the Lake?* Through arduous drill, these facts can be mastered, but they rob the masterpiece of its spirit and leave a mass of uninspiring verbiage. Questions which stir thought, arouse appreciation, and prompt expression give the child a permanent trinity of literary values. Questions should be retrospective as well as prospective. In Act. II, Cæsar boasts, "The Ides of March have come." Where was this first warning given? Let the children look back and find it in the first act. In Act I, Scene II, the conversation of Brutus and Cassius is interrupted by shouts. "What is the cause for the shouting?" Let the children turn a few pages and infer the reason for the shouting. Act II, Scene I, shows Brutus reading letters of appeal and protest from the populace of Rome. "Where are we prepared for these letters?" Let the children look back and find out. Such questions afford an opportunity for many incidental reviews and serve to unify the entire masterpiece.

2. *Motorize and Dramatize in Oral Reading.*—Psychology teaches that every emotion is accompanied by some physical expression, and that if we assume the physical characteristics of an emotion we soon experience the emotion itself. "If you are sad and dejected," says James, "smooth the brow, brighten the eye . . . speak in a major key, pass the genial compliment and your heart must be frigid indeed if it does not gradually thaw." The readiest means at our command for enabling the child to enter into an emotional situation is through dramatization.

In reading Father Felician's speech to his frantic flock, the child must assume a stooping posture and speak in "accents mournful." How can he feel the thrill of his plea

if he reads it in loud tones. In reading the quarrel scene in *Julius Cæsar,* the children must show their anger through loud and hostile tones. How can they experience Brutus's indignation if they read it in calm, dispassionate tones? In reading the opening scene of *Julius Cæsar* the children should imitate the painful stoop of an old cobbler or the respectful tones of the old shoemaker as he answers the officer, Flavius. If the pupil who reads Flavius's commands will assume a military posture, his voice will automatically take on a domineering tone. Unless the children enter into the physical being of the character they interpret, they cannot respond to the emotional appeal of any dramatic situation.

3. *In Difficult Passages the Teacher Must Offer the Model of Oral Expression.*—When there is doubt of the pupils' ability to read a given selection with proper expression, the teacher should read it to the class before subjecting it to inevitable mutilations by the children. In all difficult oral reading the pupils should imitate the correct rendition by the teacher. The model in oral reading must be used as frequently and as liberally as in written composition.

4. *Use and Misuse of the Dictionary.*—Practice in the use of the dictionary should be reserved exclusively for home work and seat work; it should never be given during an oral recitation. It is a common practice for teachers to stop a reading lesson while a word is being looked up in the dictionary by a member of the class. The nervousness which results from a consciousness that the class is watching makes the child who is thus victimized take much longer than usual and in his excitement he reads off the wrong definition. The spirit and the forward movement

of the whole lesson are killed for the petty interest in a word. Despite the pedagogical dictum, "Never tell what the child can find out for itself," the teacher should give the meaning of the word and make no more ado.

This use of the dictionary in oral reading not only sacrifices the spirit of the lesson, but it (1) discourages and weakens the child's power to get the meaning of words from the context. Thus the child reads, "My midnight orisons said o'er, a prayer with every bead of gold, I'll turn to rest and dream no more." "Orisons" can mean only one thing, "prayers"; so why go to the dictionary? Few words have fixed values; they derive their meaning from the company they keep. (2) A dictionary definition may often be useless. Thus Cæsar complains about flatterers, who with "low crook'd court'sies and base spaniel fawning." The context and not the dictionary will give Cæsar's meaning. The method of deriving meaning through the context has been called "the insidious practice of guessing at words," but it has a place in class work coördinate with the dictionary method.

5. *Treatment of Allusions.*—Literary text is rich in allusion. Much time is therefore spent on the meaning of *murmuring pines, druids of eld, the fault is not in our stars but in ourselves.* It is obvious that too intensive a study of these allusions undermines interest in any lesson. The teacher must therefore be discriminating and take up only such allusions as (1) recur frequently, or (2) determine the meaning of an important incident, or (3) refer to things already learned. Examples of these are: *Ides of March, to move Olympus, druids of eld.* But we should dismiss from consideration such allusions as are introduced for local color and occur therefore only in this

one connection. "The Feast of Lupercal" can be passed over without any more explanation than the word "Feast" suggests. To dilate on the meaning of such allusions is to sacrifice interest in literature for useless information.

6. *Illustrative Material.*—While the child's imagination may be relied upon to image people, incidents and actions which reflect in part the day's life, it is impossible for it to construct situations that are altogether new. When the background is entirely foreign to the child, illustrative aids are absolutely essential. How can city children image the beauties of the lakes, the rolling hills, the towering mountain peaks that Scott describes unless we bring to them a wide and varied collection of pictures? Every type of illustrative aid should be brought to the pupils.

Requiring the children to collect pictures that illustrate any phase of the story and to paste these into a scrap book, with appropriate lines from the masterpiece, as legends, makes an interesting project. Newspapers, old magazines, publishers' catalogues and advertising folders issued by traveling agencies offer fruitful sources of material. Scrap book contests arouse keen competition and give evidence of the pleasure children find in such an assignment.

Devices for Emphasizing the Meaning of the Masterpiece as a Whole

While individual parts and selections need explanation and elaboration, attention must be given to the meaning and spirit of the masterpiece as a whole or to its larger subdivisions. What shall we do to emphasize these?

1. *Study of Plot Structure.*—The study of plot structure is exceedingly valuable because it gives the children a

comprehensive view of the story and reveals mode of dramatic construction. The elements in the study of plot structure include the following:

1. The main story.
2. The subsidiary stories. The street scene which opens the first act of *Julius Cæsar* or the scene immediately preceding the assassination of Cæsar are illustrations of subsidiary stories. The children are led to a consideration of the number of these stories, whether each is germane to the main narrative, and the dramatic value of each.
3. Where is the climax?
4. Who is the central figure around whom the story is woven?
5. Who are the characters that are necessary to the story? Why are the others brought in?
6. Classify the story. Is it a tragedy, comedy, epic?
7. Why is prose or poetry used in the telling of the story?

2. *Grasping and Recognizing Fundamental Themes.*—A second means of emphasizing the meaning of the entire masterpiece is by constantly seeking to recognize the fundamental themes as they recur. Early in the intensive study teacher and children should decide upon the central thought in the whole story. In *Evangeline,* "The beauty and strength of woman's devotion"; in *The Lady of the Lake,* "The free, rugged, honest life of the Scotch Highlanders," may be mentioned as examples. The same thought can be applied in character study, for the children may be led to recognize the dominant note in each personality. Thus Brutus becomes synonymous with high-mindedness and disinterested love of country, while Cassius is made the embodiment of cunning and craftiness. When any incident that reveals the main theme of the masterpiece or a dominant trait of character is por-

trayed, it should be interpreted and its symbolism noted by all the children. This constant recognition of fundamental themes brings with it an element of pleasure. Just as the dominent *motif* is struck in music again and again, so, too, in literature, a *motif* of sentiment is introduced and then played upon in various keys and different strains. Encouraging children to recognize these fundamental themes as they recur gives them, again, a lasting impression, affords opportunities for natural and incidental reviews, and serves to unify the whole masterpiece.

3. *Versification.*—A final means of bringing out the spirit of the entire masterpiece is through a study of versification. To introduce the children to the technicalities of poetic structure is most unwise. This is the mechanics of poetry which, for children, deadens its spirit and robs it of its very life. The versification that is taken up in the junior high school should be studied solely "in the interest of sympathetic and expressive oral reading." Scansion must not be a scheme of notation, but a study of emphasis, rhythm and tempo. Children should be led to see that there is a relation between versification and music; that the line of music is divided into measures, while the line of poetry is divided into feet; that each measure in music has its accented note or notes and each foot has its accented syllable; that music conveys emotions just as versification intensifies the thought. Let the child realize that even though he knew no English he would nevertheless feel the minor strain of the tragedy of *Evangeline* by listening to

This is the | forest pri | meval. The | murmuring | pines and the | hemlocks.

while the lines,

Wĭth hárk | ănd whóop | ănd wíld | hăllóo
Nŏ rés | Bĕnvóir | lĭch's éch | ŏĕs knéw,

suggest at once the excitement and the speed of the chase of *The Lady of the Lake.* Children must not be burdened with complex terminology like dactylic hexameter or iambic tetrameter. For them, the sole function of versification is to give an intenser appreciation of the meaning and the message of the masterpiece.

The Application of the Masterpiece

Shall There Be a Third Reading?

Many courses of study prescribe a third reading, which is to follow the intensive study of the masterpiece. The arguments advanced for this procedure assert (1) that children experience a sense of joy when they realize their increased power of literary appreciation and interpretation; (2) that a pleasant, lasting impression is thus given; (3) that the masterpiece is unified in the minds of the pupils by this re-reading. In the method that was suggested for short literary selections this final reading was urged because it gives these advantages. But when this third reading is applied to a long masterpiece, the results are not satisfactory for many reasons:

1. The third reading takes long and causes interest to wane. Experience shows that the children exhibit an attitude of decided indifference to this reading.

2. Since this reading is not fraught with the keen de-

light that characterizes the first reading, the final effect upon the pupils is bad.

3. There is no need of reading the masterpiece a third time for the sake of unity. The method of alternating between intensive and extensive reading throughout the entire masterpiece serves to give the child a consistent and complete view of the entire story. The third reading usually becomes a lifeless and useless repetition which destroys what has been built up so laboriously. The teacher will find that there are other and more profitable ways of reviewing the masterpiece and having the children express its message than by an actual re-reading. We will consider some of the procedures which give better results.

Substitutes for the Third Reading

1. *Through Simple Dramatization of the Masterpiece.*—An effective dramatization does not require an elaborate display of costumes, scenic setting, or auxiliaries of any kind. In an eighth-year class a simple but pleasing and suggestive recital of *The Lady of the Lake* was given in the following way: One of the children, who was master of ceremonies, stepped forward and explained that this was a story dealing with Scotch highland life, and outlined in a very few words the causes which led to the action in the story. He told of the chase in which the hunter pursued the stag until his steed sank exhausted. He continued, "The hunter grieved at this misfortune to his faithful horse, then addressed it as follows." At this point one of the boys of the class who was responsible for this selection stepped forward and recited the hunter's appreciation of his steed. The first boy then resumed his story, telling a brief part in his own words, until he came to the next vital part,

which was recited by another pupil to whom it had been assigned. In this way the entire masterpiece was completed. The whole story was rehearsed, but the newness of the procedure sustained the interest throughout. *All* of the children took part and *much* of the masterpiece was *committed to memory.*

2. *Through Elaborate Dramatizations.*—The second means of reviewing the masterpiece is through the elaborate dramatization of the significant parts. While this work of preparing costumes and training in careful dramatic rendition is commendable, it is a question worth much consideration whether the time and effort of both teacher and pupils are commensurate with the benefits and delights which the children derive from this work. Then, too, we must notice that in most of these dramatizations only a few of the children take part and thus receive the benefits which participation in such work would naturally give. In addition, it must be observed that only those children who speak well and are unabashed in the face of an audience are usually selected for this exhibition. These elaborate dramatizations are "star performances" and hardly merit a place as class work.

3. *Through Memorization and Recitation.*—A good means of reviewing and applying the masterpiece is to require the children to memorize vital and striking parts. The teacher knows that memorizing literary selections has its educational results: (1) It enriches the vocabulary; (2) it develops a storehouse of beautiful expressions; (3) it gives the child a number of lofty sentiments artistically expressed; (4) it leaves the child a permanent store of literary gems which grow in beauty and richness as the mind gains in insight and appreciation. But these reasons

form motive for the teacher and not for the child. Pupils memorize what is assigned from a sense of fear because of the authority which is vested in the teacher.

All memorization by the pupils should be prompted by an urgent motive. Let the children decide what parts of the masterpiece they want to memorize. The choice usually falls upon those selections which were studied intensively and appreciatively. The pupils must then be led to feel that effective dramatization of their favorite selections is impossible unless they memorize them. Call up two children and ask them to go through the scene between Brutus and Lucius. Children delight in these dramatizations but they soon realize that their dramatic presentation lacks force and conviction, because they must rely on the printed page for every word and every cue. Now there is a motive for memorizing this selection and the children set to work with a rational impulse.

4. *Through Projects in Written Composition.*—Interesting adaptations for composition purposes can be made of situations in the masterpiece. Children may assume that they are participants in the story and write justifying or explaining their part in the plot; they may report various incidents as to a newspaper; they may suggest different endings for the story; they may write appreciations of some of the characters or of the descriptions or of the subsidiary stories.

For the able pupils of the eighth or ninth year, it is well to plan a related composition project. After a study of *David Copperfield* or *Sentimental Tommy*, the class decides to write and produce a play or scenario based on this story. In successive composition lessons, pupils must solve some of the following problems in working out their proj-

ect: What is the most appropriate title of the proposed play? How many acts and scenes shall we plan and what shall be the content of each? Can the scenes as planned be staged? How shall we decide who writes the best first scene; the best second scene, etc.? Who will put the play together? What stage directions and descriptions of stage setting shall we include? Who will take the various parts in the actual presentation of the play? What facts shall the program include? What is the most appropriate program design? What publicity shall we seek? What advertising copy shall we write? Here are tasks that seem very vital to pupils and that elicit therefore their best efforts to organize their ideas and to express them with utmost clearness and effectiveness.

5. *Through Oral Compositions and Interesting Problems.*—Another means of applying the subject-matter studied in the masterpiece is through frequent oral composition. The story should be seized upon as a good means for giving the children practice for talking convincingly and consecutively on a topic that they know. The story now means much to the child and he enjoys telling it. Topics like the following can be assigned for these oral discussions:

Brutus and the conspirators are in debate; the latter favor the death of Antony, but the former is opposed to unnecessary murder. Argue the wisdom of each side.

What traits in the characters of Antony and of Brutus can be inferred from their respective speeches to the Roman populace?

What titles, other than *Julius Cæsar* would you suggest for this play? Defend your suggestion!

Children should be trained to reflect a moment on the

given topic in order to decide, first, on an organization of sequence, second, on what statements to make, and, third, on what to cite in support of their conclusions. Progress will be slow; with many children the work will be discouraging at the beginning, but the advantages of such work, begun in the middle of the school course and continued persistently through the ninth grade are far-reaching.

6. *Through Ethical Lessons.*—Situations which present a problem in human relationship should be made the basis for a discussion of right and wrong. The captain in *Evangeline* banishes the Acadians. Should he have carried out the order, if he had believed it wrong? Pupils attack such a problem with avidity. Let them argue the issue back and forth, pupils answering each other in the manner of a highly socialized recitation. Later the teacher, by a few judicious questions, seeks to indicate the essence of the problem. The question is once more taken up for class discussion. A second and a third lesson may be necessary to come to a satisfying decision. But throughout the discussion there is real oral composition, talking to convince others and listening to others in the hope of seeing truth.

7. *Through Examinations.*—Regular written examinations are excellent means of having children review and apply the content of their literary studies, but careful attention must be given to their organization. These examinations should be made up of two distinct parts:

Part I.—*To test the knowledge the child has gained of the masterpiece.* Questions in this part of the test should be designed to test the child's knowledge of what was covered in class. As types of such questions we may sub-

mit: (1) What is the meaning of "orisons," "low crook'd court'sies"? (2) Name and identify the figures of speech in the following . . . (3) Who said "Friends, Romans, countrymen . . ."? (4) What is the value of Scene I in Act I?

Part II.—*The test for increased power of interpretation and appreciation.* The aim of the second part of the test is radically different. As a result of repeated intensive studies it is hoped that the child will gain more than the definite specific information; that the child will grow in the power of independent interpretation. The answers to the questions in this part of the test must call for judgment, for keen analysis, and for appreciation. Allow the children to have their books open as they answer the question.

Let us assume that the children have read silently the scene in which Antony asks for permission to bury Caesar and then speak after Brutus. With the aid of their books and dictionaries, the pupils are required to answer the following:

Point out three traits of Antony's character and three of Brutus's that are revealed in this scene. Give evidence for the traits you select.

Further questions suitable for this part of the test are:

Name some errors of judgment that Brutus made. What light do they throw on his character?

Cæsar is killed early in the play. Would you have called the play *Julius Cæsar?* Justify your answer or your choice of a title.

The ghost of Cæsar appears to the gentle Brutus. Had you written the play would you have made it so appear or

would you have caused the ghost to appear to the crafty Cassius?

Evangeline finds Gabriel as he is dying. Would you have changed the ending in any way? Justify your answer.

But, for some inexplicable reason, this type of examination is not common. On examining recent test papers given by principals, superintendents, or teachers' journals one is confronted by the following:

1. Where was the great battle between the Triumvirs and the Conspirators fought? Locate the place.
2. What is meant by the "Feast of Lupercal"?
3. From what source did Shakespeare obtain his version of *Julius Cæsar?*
4. Name the author of *Miles Standish.* What is his nationality? Name another work. About what colony is it? When do the events take place?
5. What sort of poem is *Evangeline?* What is its meter? What sections of the United States and Canada are mentioned? In what city does the last scene take place? What bay is near the village? What promontory?
6. Who is the author of *The Lady of the Lake?* Where born? What two important events took place in America at the time of his birth?

What Shall Literature Give the Junior High School Graduate?

Those principals and supervisors who formulated these questions failed because they neglected to take cognizance of the vital aims that should govern the teaching of literature. They failed to realize that the study of these masterpieces must give children an acquaintanceship with the best literary forms, must develop a standard by means of which they can judge literary merit, must inculcate a love

for the spirit and the message of true literature, and must develop ability for independent literary interpretation. Good teaching of literature, therefore, gives the child a permanent treasure of delightful memories and ushers him into a new world where stirring scenes and sweet voices lead him to a realization that he is living a fuller and richer life.

Suggested Reading

Bolenius, E. M., *The Teaching of Literature in the Grammar Grades and in High School* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Carpenter, Baker and Scott, *The Teaching of English* (Longmans, Green & Co.), pp. 155-187.

Corson, Hiram, *Aims of Literary Studies* (Macmillan Co.).

Germane and Germane, *Silent Reading* (Row, Peterson & Co.), Ch. xv.

Goldwasser, I. E., *Method and Methods in the Teaching of English,* Chs. vii, viii, ix.

Hosic, James F., *The Elementary School Course in English,* pp. 42-53.

Leonard, S. A., *Essential Principles of Teaching Reading and Literature* (J. B. Lippincott Co.).

McMurry, Charles A., *Special Method in English Classics* (Macmillan Co.).

Thomas, C. S., *The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools* (Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Wheat, H. G., *The Teaching of Reading* (Ginn & Co.), Ch. xvi.

CHAPTER XIV

STANDARDIZED TESTS IN READING

Need for an Objective Measuring Medium

In reading as in most school subjects, pupil-ability is measured by teacher judgment. But personal judgment is often nothing more than a variable attitude too frequently molded by circumstances not especially germane to the issue which is being judged. The pupil's oral reading is judged 60 per cent by the supervisor and 85 per cent by the teacher. The supervisor makes out a strong case to uphold his rating. It is not unusual to find that the teacher can argue as well. The quality of the pupil's voice, the significance of a particular mispronunciation, the appeal in the pupil's eyes, the state of health of the person rating—all these influence judgment to a greater extent than we are willing to admit. It is not surprising, therefore, to find many instances of variations of 30 to 40 per cent in the ratings given pupils by the same person using text of approximately equal difficulty. Which rating stands for the child?

In some subjects, such as composition, arithmetic, and drawing, a re-evaluation is possible. But in reading, the spoken performance lives for the moment only and then becomes a memory. How shall we determine the worth of the teacher's efforts to improve the reading of her class? Without an objective instrument independent of the

personal idiosyncracies this cannot be done? How shall we gauge the worth of a particular teaching device? Will endless debate on its merits produce a conclusion that we can take seriously? If we had an objective measuring medium, we would use the device with one group but not with another and then determine the degree of improvement of the pupils in the two groups. What if a teacher insists that most of her recently promoted pupils are below grade in reading? How shall the true status be determined? By asking the previous teacher? The supervisor? Has the course of study in reading been successful? The superintendent under whom it was developed and administered, insists that the graduates possess adequate reading skill. Is he right? Who shall give the final and satisfying judgment? A standardized reading test which will test reading ability free from all subjective conditions is a vitally needed instructional instrument.

What Shall We Ask of a Reading Test?

1. *Is It Thoroughly Objective?*—Surely, our first demand of a reading scale is that it shall eliminate capricious judgment and measure altogether on a purely objective basis.

2. *Is It Diagnostic?*—Merely measuring accurately is help enough but we are eager to do more than give each child a rating label. The test must reveal significant weakness and enable the teacher to diagnose each reading case and prescribe remedial practices. Without this constructive aid, reading scales fail in the most vital function.

3. *Has It Evolved a Unit of Measurement?*—Exact measurement is impossible without an adequate unit? What shall the reading unit be? The word? Surely

words vary in length, difficulty and familiarity. The syllable? Here the same objections apply and in addition, the syllable conveys no meaning. A reading unit should be at least rational. The sentence? But sentences vary even more than words. How shall we secure text that makes the same appeal to all types of pupils? The only practical solution is to adopt the word as the unit with a full realization that it is not a scientific unit and meets the situation only in a general way.

4. *Does It Measure Reading Ability Directly?*—To-day, we can measure reading skill only indirectly through certain reactions that are not reading. Pupils are asked to answer questions, to summarize the text or to make graphic representation of what was read. In measuring drawing ability, children are asked to draw; composition ability, to compose. But in a reading test, children are asked to give evidence of comprehension by drawing or speaking or writing. To what extent does an answer expressed in language or in graphic form reveal reading ability? No one has yet given the answer.

5. *Does It Measure Different Types of Reading?*—There are forms of reading that require different sets of abilities and vary from one another as much as if they were two different subjects. There is far less difference between geography and history as school subjects than between silent and oral reading or between rapid reading for story and careful reading for assimilation. Reading ability is too general. It must be particularized and each variety measured.

6. *Is It Scientific in Development?*—The test must be conceived and elaborated in a truly scientific spirit. Only tested conclusions should enter and only tested data should

be used. All conditions of scientific experimentation, such as checks and controls, accurate measurement, statistical refinement, and objective evidence must be present in evolving the test.

7. *Is It Mechanically Efficient?*—(*a*) Is the test simple to administer and score? (*b*) Will children readily understand directions? Are directions to teachers and pupils clearly differentiated? (*c*) Are paper, type, arrangement, all conducive to ready work? (*d*) Is the text suitable and of general appeal? (*e*) Can results be interpreted by teachers not versed in statistical terms and processes? (*f*) Are norms provided?

The authors of the best reading tests will not claim these qualities for their own products. No test thus far issued has them. But it is well to formulate reasonable demands of a measuring scale so that we may know how far from scientific is the one we happen to use.

The Standardized Reading Scales

Group I.—Scales That Measure Word Recognition

The Jones Scale[1]

Description.—The author selected 192 sight words and 118 phonic words that were found in ten primers. The number of times a word was used determined its relative importance. These words are arranged in columns ready for the pupil to utter them. Since these words are rated in relative importance, the number of words and the kind of words read by the pupil will determine his score.

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[1] R. G. Jones, *Scale for Teaching and Testing Elementary Reading* (Rockford, Ill.).

Evaluation.—The scale is well planned and mechanically good. It gives scores that aid in understanding pupil attainment. But in the final analysis, this is not a reading test but a word test for reading is thought getting not word recognition. It may be argued further that words are frequently introduced into primers not because of their use in life but rather for their value in phonetic analysis. The list selected from everyday speech would therefore come closer to measuring reading ability.

Thorndike Scale [2]

Aim and Scope.—Four forms of this test are offered as a means of determining the reading vocabulary of a class or a pupil. Although designed for grades IV-VIII, this test can be used in grades III and IX with good effect. Each form of the scale contains ten to thirteen lines of words to be identified by a process of classification. The words in each line are found by test to be of equal difficulty. A sample of the test is offered below.

SAMPLES FROM THORNDIKE'S VISUAL VOCABULARY SCALES MUCH ABBREVIATED

Write the letter *F* under every word that means a *flower*.
Write the letter *N* under every word that means a *boy's name*.
Write the letter *T* under every word like *now* and *then* that that means something to do with *time*.

during, noon, jesse, month, jeffrey, oscar, forenoon, generous, later, rhinoceros.

croquet, jasper, capable, hollyhock, jason, shuffleboard, conrad, owen, gradual, hiram.

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[2] E. L. Thorndike, *Improved Scale for Visual Vocabulary* (Teachers College, Bureau of Publications, Columbia University).

anemone, depraved, beagle, balsam, hugh, prudent, calleopsis, whist, tolerant, roderic.

Evaluation.—Here again we have a test that must not be regarded as an adequate measure of reading ability. It is what the author says it is, a scale for measuring visual vocabulary, for measuring an important constituent of reading ability. It is an excellent test statistically considered. Teachers complain that the calculations are difficult and that the test would gain in value if all words were presented with initial capital letters. To print the name, oscar, with a small letter, makes it neither a word nor a name. Trabue reports that confusion arises from this source.

Group II.—Scales That Measure Ability in Oral Reading

Gray's Test [3]

Aim and Scope.—Here we have a courageous attempt to measure the quality of oral reading. Twelve short selections, graded from very simple to difficult and printed in type of decreasing size are included. Each child is examined individually to ascertain two records: (*a*) the amount of time required for reading a selection; (*b*) the errors made, for example, omissions, repetitions, insertions, substitutions, mispronunciations, etc. The score of rate and quality are then combined. Samples 1, 2, 4, 6, 9 and 12 from Gray's *Oral Reading Test* are reproduced on the pages that follow.

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[3] W. S. Gray, *Oral Reading Test* (Public School Publishing Co., Bloomington, Ill.).

1

A boy had a dog.
The dog ran into the woods.
The boy ran after the dog.
He wanted the dog to go home.
But the dog would not go home.
The little boy said,
"I cannot go home without my dog."
Then the boy began to cry.

2

Once there was a little pig.
He lived with his mother in a pen.
One day he saw his four feet.
"Mother," he said, "what can I do with my feet?"
His mother said, "You can run with them."
So the little pig ran round and round the pen.

4

Once there lived a king and a queen in a large palace. But the king and queen were not happy. There were no little children in the house or garden. One day they found a poor little boy and girl at their door. They took them into the beautiful

palace and made them their own. The king and queen were then happy.

6

The part of farming enjoyed most by a boy is the making of maple sugar. It is better than blackberrying and almost as good as fishing. One reason why a boy likes this work is that someone else does most of it. It is a sort of work in which he can appear to be very industrious and yet do but little.

9

He was approximately six feet tall and his body was well proportioned. His complexion inclined to the florid; his eyes were blue and remarkably far apart. A profusion of hair covered the forehead. He was scrupulously neat in his appearance; and, although he habitually left his tent early, he was well dressed.

12

The hypotheses concerning physical phenomena formulated by the early philosophers proved to be inconsistent and in general not universally applicable. Before relatively accurate principles could

be established, physicists, mathematicians, and statisticians had to combine forces and work arduously.

Evaluation.—The most telling limitations in this test seem inherent in the nature of the enterprise rather than in this particular test. It is urged (*a*) that no way is given of recording a pupil's performance for a second judgment; (*b*) that the testing is time consuming and exceedingly tedious; (*c*) that merit in oral reading is no measure of ability to obtain thought for the glib oral reader may not have a glimmer of the author's message. These observations are all true, but surely the author cannot be charged with these shortcomings of his scale. Rather must the charge be laid at the door of the task itself. The same can be said of any oral reading test.

On the other hand, we may insist that fusing both scores, for rate and for errors, gives a composite score that means less than each subscore. If the test were rearranged mechanically so that a child could not read the succeeding selection before the time intended, an improvement would be effected. Since the vital function of reading is to secure thought, most of what is here revealed can be ascertained better and quicker in a simple vocabulary and pronunciation test. Then, too, rate in oral reading is not a significant factor in effective reading for it may be determined to a great extent by speech habits. And finally, Courtis insists that the difficulty in succeeding selections is produced by certain traps rather than by increasing difficulty of language and content. But what is a trap to one person is a legitimate difficulty to another. Gray's test is unique in the field of oral reading.

Group III.—Scales That Measure Ability in Silent Reading

The Courtis Test [4]

Description.—This scale is made up of a story of seventy lines, given in five sections and designed for grades II–VI inclusive. The story is read as a whole first and then in sections. Five test questions are asked on each section. The whole class can be tested at the same time. At a signal from the examiner, each pupil marks the last word he read. In this way reading rate is determined. The test measures time, amount read, and amount acquired.

Evaluation.—Like all of Courtis' work, this silent reading test is very well planned and readily scored. It is an effective test. It is, however, non-diagnostic. Some teachers find that the requirement that each child mark his last word read is distracting to many pupils. This is, however, a relatively minor objection. A serious limitation is found in the practice of having the child mark the rate at the end of the first reading and the teacher mark comprehension at the end of the second reading. We have here a record of rate independent of ability to get the thought. What value is a reading rate unless it is based on reading for the thought. A rapid reader who gets nothing of the text in the first reading is a poor reader. This kind of reader is not revealed by the Courtis Test.

Kelly's Kansas Silent Reading Test [5]

Content.—A series of short unrelated paragraphs demanding different types of mental reaction constitute this

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[4] S. A. Courtis, *Courtis Standardized Test, Silent Reading No. 2* (Detroit, Mich.).

[5] F. J. Kelly, *The Kansas Silent Reading Test* (State Normal School, Emporia, Kansas).

test. The selections are graded for rate and comprehension. The final score as in Gray's Scale is the combined scores for rate and comprehension. A few samples of the test for grades III, IV, and V are here offered.

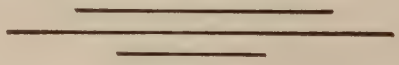
Here are some names of things. Put a line around the name of the one which is most nearly round in every way like a ball. VALUE 2.0

saucer teacup orange pear arm

A recipe calls for milk, sugar, cornstarch and eggs. I have milk, sugar and eggs. What must I get before I can use the recipe? VALUE 2.1

We planted three trees in a row. The first one was nine feet tall and the last one was three feet shorter than the first one. The middle one was two feet taller than the last one. How tall was the middle one? VALUE 2.2

Below are three lines. If the middle line is the longest, put a cross after the last line. If the last line is the longest, put a cross after the first line. If the first line is the longest, put a circle in front of the middle line. VALUE 2.3



Three men have to walk to a town ten miles away. Each man carries a load. The first carries 25 pounds, the second 30 pounds, and the third 40 pounds. The heavier the load, the slower the man travels. In order that they may arrive in town at the same time, which man must start first? VALUE 3.1

Evaluation.—These scales have enjoyed wide use in spite of the fact that the content is often about experiences entirely new for the children for whom the test is intended. Gradation is determined, not by the relative number of pupils able to read a selection but by the relative amount of time required to read it. Trabue [6] believes that the amounts of difference between consecutive elements vary so greatly that a false impression of the amounts of difference between pupils is created. The combination of rate and comprehension aggravates this false impression. The test, despite these limitations and its inability to serve diagnostically, is very useful for it is an easily administered objective instrument for measuring silent reading ability.

These samples illustrate what is meant by the statement, "An inherent weakness in reading tests is that reading ability is measured indirectly," by ability displayed not in reading alone but in arithmetic, drawing or manipulating the factors of a problem. How is reading ability judged in samples **2.2**, **2.3** and **3.1** reproduced above?

Monroe's Test [7]

General Description. Except for two marked differences, this scale is similar to the Kansas City Test. It does not combine rate and comprehension scores and limits itself to children's experiences by selecting material from commonly used readers. It has three distinct forms, each form is like a separate test. Should children be familiar with

[6] M. R. Trabue, *Measuring Results in Education* (American Book Co., p. 358).

[7] W. S. Monroe, *Monroe's Standardized Silent Reading Tests* (Public School Publishing Co.).

Form I, then Form II can be given for it is just as effective a scale. The numbers at the left indicate the total number of words read to that line. A few specimens are given.

Samples from Test I

1. One evening in the late autumn I saw some beautiful
birds come out of the bushes. They were as white as snow.
They were swans. They flew high in the air and sailed away
to the warm South.

38 What kind of bird did I see?

45 pigeon duck goose canary swan

---

50 2. Hiawatha was a little Indian boy. He had no father
61 and no mother. He lived with his grandmother. His home
73 was in a wigwam near the river.

77 Draw a line under the word that tells with whom Hiawatha
88 lived.

89 father mother grandfather uncle grandmother

---

94 3. Nowhere in the world do the children have so many
105 good times as in Japan. They are allowed to play anywhere, and
117 there are all sorts of toys and games for their amusement.

127 Draw a line under the word which best describes the chil-
138 dren of Japan.

140 cross happy fretful good contented

Samples from Test II

1. It was the garden-land of Antioch. Even the hedges,
9 besides the lure of shade, offered passers-by sweet promises of
20 wine and clusters of purple grapes. Over melon patches, and
30 through apricot and fig tree groves, and groves of oranges and
42 limes, the whitewashed houses of the farmers were seen.

49 What kind of land was this?

55 barren hilly productive infertile desert

---

60 2. It was cold, bleak, biting weather; foggy withal; and he
70 could hear the people in the court outside go wheezing up and

82 down, beating their hands upon their breasts and stamping
92 their feet upon the pavement-stones to warm them.

99 What kind of picture does this paragraph describe?

107 **comfortable luxurious cheerless pleasant exciting**

---

360 8. The boy stood on the burning deck,
367 Whence all but he had fled;
373 The flame that lit the battle's wreck,
380 Shone round him o'er the dead;
386 Yet beautiful and bright he stood,
392 As born to rule the storm.

398 What word best describes the boy?

404 **cowardly mischievous brave young good**

The standards derived from scores obtained early in the school year from an approximately equal number of urban and rural schools pupils are given below:

GRADE MEDIANS MONROE SILENT READING REVISED

Grade	Comprehension			Rate		
	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3
III.....	3.8	3.8	3.8	82	78	81
IV.....	7.7	7.7	7.7	122	116	121
V.....	9.8	9.8	9.8	142	135	141
VI.....	11.0	11.1	11.7	159	164	179
VII.....	12.5	12.6	13.3	171	176	192
VIII.....	13.7	13.8	14.6	185	191	208

With such definite objective data to serve as a basis for comparison and with standardized selections for testing, a pupil's progress can be measured with reasonable accuracy.

The Burgess Scale [8]

Description.—A series of twenty illustrated selections of equal difficulty make up this test in silent reading. Each part is carefully planned with due regard to (*a*) difficulties of vocabulary and language structure; (*b*) mechanical arrangements; (*c*) details of size of type and quality of print; (*d*) character of the illustrations. After reading each selection the pupil carries out the directions contained in it. The pupil's score is determined by how much he has read successfully in five minutes. This is essentially a rate test.

Evaluation.—The Burgess Scale must be counted among the best silent reading tests yet devised. It has been reported that children show marked improvement by this scale, when only moderate practice is given in speed reading. It is argued therefore that the scale loses in value as pupils keep on taking the different forms of the test. If this were proved beyond a doubt, the scale would be an unusually effective means of discovering those children who cannot increase their reading rate because of peculiar eye habits or defects of vision.

Gray's Silent Reading Test [9]

Aim and Scope.—Gray's test seeks to measure rate and quality of a pupil's silent reading. Three selections are used: *Tiny Tad,* consisting of about one hundred words for Grades II and III; *The Grasshoppers* for Grades IV–VI; *Ancient Ships* for Grades VI and VIII. Each selection is printed on a wide sheet which is divided into three sec-

[8] M. A. Burgess, *The Measurement of Silent Reading* (Russell Sage Foundation, New York).

[9] W. S. Gray, *Gray's Silent Reading Test* (University of Illinois).

tions. These sections are therefore side by side. As the child completes one section, he must raise his eyes to continue at the top of the next section. The shift of eyes gives the examiner a means of measuring the rate at which a child reads. Comprehension is measured by the reproduction of the selection and the answers—oral in Grades II and III, written in the others—to ten questions. The quality score combines the two scores obtained in reproducing the story and in answering the set questions. The rate score is the time required by a pupil to read 100 words. The test for Grades II and III is reproduced on page 286, together with the ten questions.

The teacher now says, "Tell me the answers to these questions":

1. How many legs did Tiny Tad have at the first of the story?
2. How did Tiny compare in size with most of the other tadpoles in the pond?
3. Which legs did Tiny wish would grow?
4. Where did Tiny say he would go when he got all his legs?
5. What did Tiny wish he had to hop with him?
6. What did Tiny do to make his legs grow strong?
7. How old was Tiny when he decided to leave the pond?
8. What part of the morning did Tiny choose for leaving the pond?
9. How did Tiny get upon the bank?
10. What size was Tiny at the end of the story?

Evaluation.—Gray's test is an earnest attempt to supply to school people an objective instrument for measuring ability in silent reading. Objection is made that it is non-scientific in character because it does not give relative weights to each of the ten questions which are certainly

TINY TAD

FOR GRADES II AND III

Tiny Tad was a queer little fellow with only two legs and a short tail. He was nearly black, too, and much smaller than most tadpoles in the big pond. He could hardly wait for his front legs to grow.

"When I have them all," he said, "I'll leave this dirty water and go up into the orchard. What fun it will be to hop and hop and hop. If only I had a little brother to hop with me, I should be so happy."

It wasn't long before his legs began to grow. He jumped about and kicked around until his legs grew quite strong. "I am going out on the bank to see if I can hop," he said one night when he was just six weeks old.

The sun was hardly up the next morning when a little toad jumped out of the water and hopped out on the bank. He was very small, but none too small for his little legs that wobbled under him. It was Tiny, the young toad.

not of equal difficulty. Nor should the answers to the ten questions be allowed the same credit as the reproduction. These observations are true but we must yet prove that such refinement would increase the usefulness of this test.

A real difficulty that arises in the use of this test is that it must be administered to a single pupil at a time. The time cost is therefore large. But it must be remembered that all scientific testing is time consuming and to continue giving the same drills to the whole class without differentiating them for different pupils who are grouped only after revealing experience with a real test, involves even greater waste.

Starch's Test [10]

The fundamental principles of Gray's *Silent Reading Test* are employed in the *Starch Reading Tests.* Nine carefully graded selections, designed for succeeding grades through the high school, are used. The pupil is given 30 seconds for reading and must then give the reproduction on the reverse side of the test. Separate scores for rate and comprehension are then obtained. Much is made of the emphasis in Starch's test on paragraph reading. The virtue of this stress on the paragraph is not especially clear, for all reading by mature people is sentence reading and paragraph reading.

Another very good test of power in silent reading that must be mentioned is the Haggerty Reading Examination,[11] Sigma 3. Here ability to read sentences and para-

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[10] D. Starch, *Starch Reading Test* (University Coöperative Store, (University of Wisconsin).

[11] M. E. Haggerty, *Haggerty Reading Examination,* Sigma 3 (World Book Co., Yonkers, N. Y.).

graphs as well as control of vocabulary is measured. Haggerty's *Achievement Examination in Reading,* Sigma 1, is designed for the Grades I to III. This test begins with such simple sentences as, "Put a stem on the apple" (which is followed by a drawing of a stemless apple), and ends with an eight-line paragraph.

Thorndike-McCall Reading Scales [12]

Aim and Description.—This test seeks to measure the degree of reading difficulty which a pupil can overcome in a given time or to measure the "Ability of a pupil to use reading for a specific purpose." Ten forms of this test are prepared so that pupils cannot become familiar with the content and thus make impossible the further use of this scale. Children are given up to thirty minutes for silent reading. Despite the differences in the various forms, teachers can readily translate the scores obtained in the different forms by the aid of the table provided. The type of reading and the character of the questions can be judged from the following reproduction.

Read this and then write the answers. Read it again if you need to.

On Monday Dick saw a red fox, a gray squirrel and a black snake in the woods. The next day he saw a brown rabbit and five brown mice in the field. He killed the fox and all the mice, but let the others live.

1. What was the name of the boy who saw the mice?.....

.....

2. On what day did he see the mice?.....

3. What color was the fox?.....

---

[12] *Thorndike-McCall Reading Scale* (Teachers' College, Columbia University).

Read this and then write the answers. Read it again if you need to.

Fred lives in the country. He likes to hunt and fish, and has a gun that cost sixteen dollars. His sister Grace keeps hens and ducks, and sells the eggs. She is learning to play the piano, and goes to Miss Thomas for a lesson every Saturday. She likes music but Fred doesn't.

4. Write the name of Fred's sister.....

5. What does Grace do with the eggs which her hens lay?.....

.....

6. How many lessons a week does Miss Thomas give Grace?...

.....

7. Does Fred dislike fishing?.....

.....

Do the next page.

Evaluation.—The test is not diagnostic and does not make any such pretensions. It is simply a measure, a yard stick. The examiner must use the results with restraint and reservation and not accept, at full value, all that may be implied, statistically by the score. Thus, by using the tables provided, a reading score is converted into a reading age, which in turn, may theoretically be converted into a reading quotient and finally compared with an intelligence quotient. Trabue protests, "If a child happened to answer 23 questions correctly in form 4 he is to be counted as having a Reading Age of 12 years and 0 months, while if he had answered one more question correctly, his R. A. (reading age) would have been 12 years and 8 months."[13] Experienced investigators know full well the caution that must be exercised in interpreting such scores for educational measurements were not designed for use by the inexperienced.

[13] Trabue, *Measuring Results in Education*, p. 353.

The Administration and Interpretation of Reading Tests

How to Give a Test

A standardized achievement test like an intelligence test is a delicate instrument and must be given under proper conditions if reliable results are to be attained. Adequate provision must therefore be made for testing by these standardized tests.

1. *Mechanical Preparation.*—Insure proper physical conditions—light, ventilation, suitable desk and a place that is quiet and, when necessary, affords privacy. Do not guess at the time; use a stop watch. Have all preliminary forms filled out and follow the directions implicitly.

2. *Emotional Preparation of the Pupils.*—Every effort must be made to put the child in the right frame of mind. Talk of the test as a lesson, a means to discover the kind of help each needs most. Invite pupil coöperation in this service undertaken in his behalf. Do not give the test at a time when an exciting school event is impending or immediately before a holiday. The strain attendant on examinations must be dispelled.

3. *The Teacher's Preparation.*—Know the test, know its aim and organization. Be thoroughly familiar with the required routine of giving and scoring this particular test. Above all, put prepossessions aside. Have faith in the test until actual results warrant its abandonment.

Making the Diagnoses

It must be remembered that all reading tests are essentially not diagnostic but by inference diagnoses can be made. What can these tests reveal?

1. Mastery of words and mechanics of reading
2. Rate in both oral and silent reading
3. Quality of oral reading
4. Comprehension of text read

Norms are available for three of these four abilities in reading. Compare the pupil's score with the norm for his grade or age. Is the finding in harmony with your knowledge of the pupil? Can the weakness revealed in the pupil be traced to a peculiarity of the test? What is the cause of the revealed weakness? And finally, what remedial measures must be formulated. The preceding chapter gave much thought to variety of diagnoses and the elaboration of remedial programs of instruction.

Evaluation of Reading Tests

The Common Objections to Reading Tests

It is often urged that no reading tests can be accepted as reliable measures since there is no commonly accepted definition of reading. The different scales, therefore, measure different things. But the same may be said of most subjects in the curriculum. What unanimity is there in the answers to the queries, "What is geography? What is history? What is civics? What is composition?" While we cannot agree on a specific definition, there is substantial agreement on the fundamental function of reading.

We are told that reading scales do not distinguish those mental activities involved solely in symbol interpretation from those other activities that function in reading and that are not in the focus of attentive consciousness. This is decidedly true but inability to separate one mental

activity from all others is a difficulty that must be considered relatively. It explains why reading scales are not and can never be absolutely scientific measuring instruments. But, nevertheless, they measure with greater accuracy and consistency than does capricious personal judgment. Who can distinguish completely the mental processes that are focal from those that are marginal? Who can achieve mental insulation?

Again, it is held that the correlation, that is, the degree of agreement, among the different reading tests is low. In less technical terms we would say that the results obtained by using the different tests on the same pupils show wide variations. But it must be remembered that some tests measure ability in oral reading, others in silent; some, ability to acquire the general trend of a narrative or an exposition, others, the critical reaction to a point of view. Each test measures reading from a different angle. It is noteworthy that when the same test is given six weeks apart, the correlation of results is high, .60 to .82. (Correlation 1 shows perfect agreement.) The results obtained by the use of standardized tests are three to five times as reliable as the subjective judgment of teachers.[14]

We must express deep sympathy with those who object to reading scales because of the burden they impose on busy and overworked grade teachers. It must be admitted that many, if not most teachers, are not familiar enough with test material to select and give that test which will be most revealing under certain circumstances nor can they really make diagnoses on the basis of the findings. School systems will probably develop agencies that will be charged

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[14] D. Starch, "Reliability of Reading Scales," *School and Society*, Vol. 8 (1918), pp. 86-90.

with the function of administering tests and interpreting the findings. Expert, sympathetic, evaluating officers, working in coöperation with grade teachers and school supervisors can do much to eliminate the present hit-and-miss system and raise educational practice to genuine professional dignity.

Values of Reading Tests

It is essential that we introduce all discussion of the values of reading scales with an unmistakable admission that they are still imperfect instruments in the process of development. Granted the limitations that follow such an acknowledgment, reading tests can to-day serve the schools in many ways.

1. *Values for the Pupil.*—The judgment of a pupil's reading, we saw, is more reliable when based on a standardized scale. There is greater likelihood of obtaining a true measure of progress. Reading which to one teacher is satisfactory, may be condemned by another. In spite of greater effort, a pupil's reading may therefore be marked lower than a previous but less commendatory performance. Such circumstances lead to discouragement. With the standard test, there is a more consistent judgment of a pupil's work and growth.

2. *Instructional Values.*—We saw that reading scales give us a basis for grouping pupils and providing differentiated drills. Not only is the teacher helped in making a diagnosis and planning remedial devices, but she can ascertain with greater accuracy the progress her pupils are making.

3. *Administrative Values.*—Problems in the management of a school can be attacked more intelligently with

the aid of an objective standard. The value of a particular teaching practice or device is no longer decided by putting the opinions of those who favor it against the equally personal notions of those who are opposed to it. With the reading scale we can show that progress is accelerated or retarded by the device in question. So, too, a more accurate judgment can be made of the worth (*a*) of a teacher's work in reading (*b*) of a particular course of study or (*c*) of a particular reading system. Pupils, classes, schools and school systems can now be compared for we are using a common denominator in which to express the merit of each.

Standardized reading tests, like most standardized achievement tests are still in the early experimental stage. With all their crudities, they give promise of becoming vital factors in the education of youth.

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